

KIRKMAN • ADLARD • RATHBURN

37

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# THE WALKING DEAD™



Cliff 10/08



IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

# THE WALKING

# DEAD™

**ROBERT KIRKMAN**

Creator, Writer

**CHARLIE ADLARD**

Penciler, Inker, Cover

**CLIFF RATHBURN**

Gray Tones, Cover Colors, Back Cover

**RUS WOOTON**

Letterer

## Previously:

After helping Rick and crew escape from Woodbury, Martinez slipped away to reveal the location of the prison, a much safer stronghold, to the people of Woodbury. Rick refused to let this happen. He chased Martinez down and murdered him. Now it is clear that Woodbury is looking for them--and it's only a matter of time until they find the prison and try to take it--with force.

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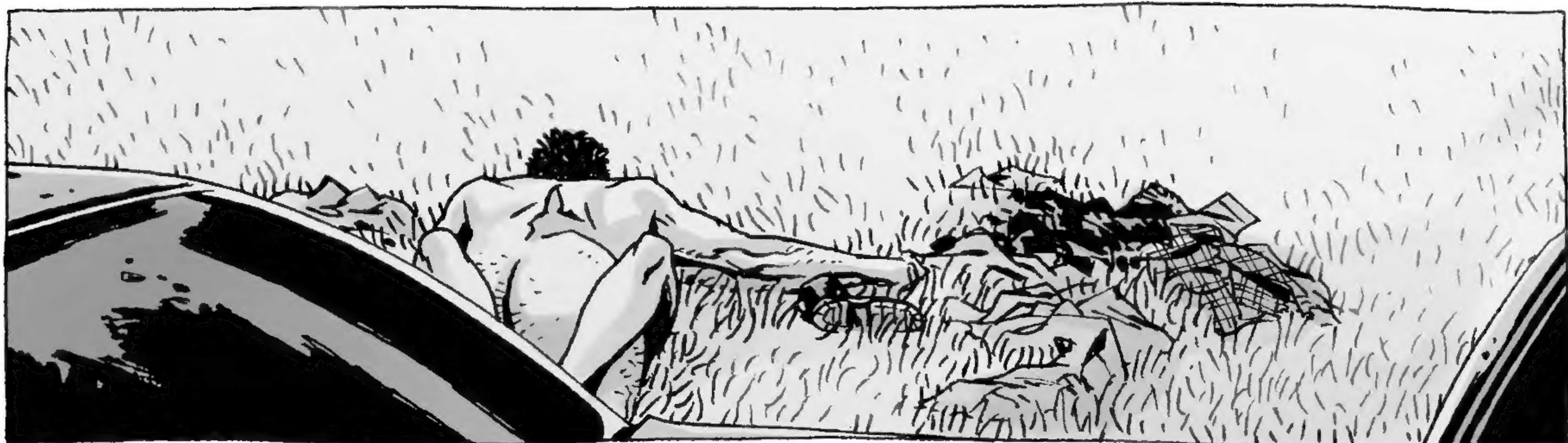
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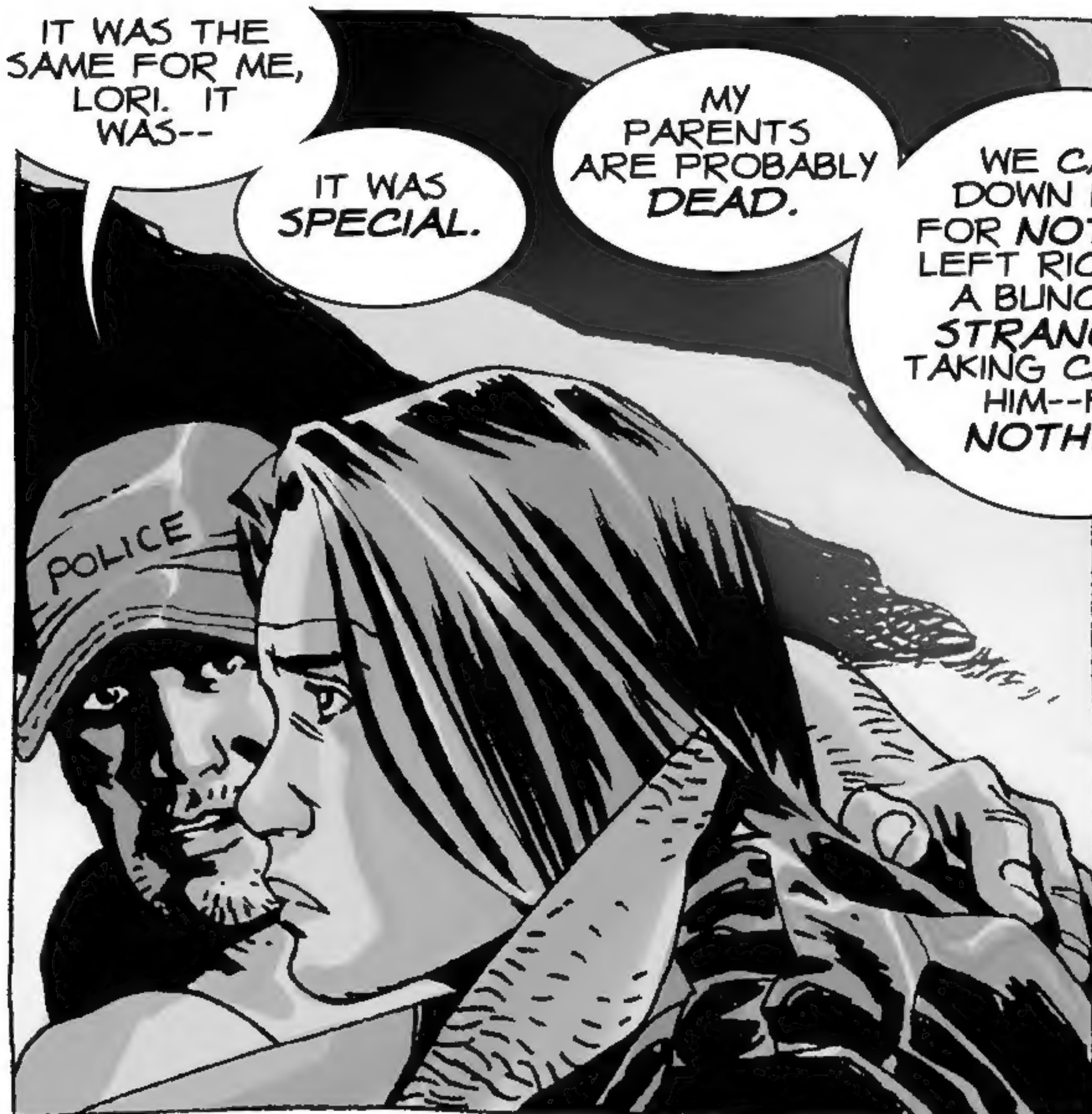
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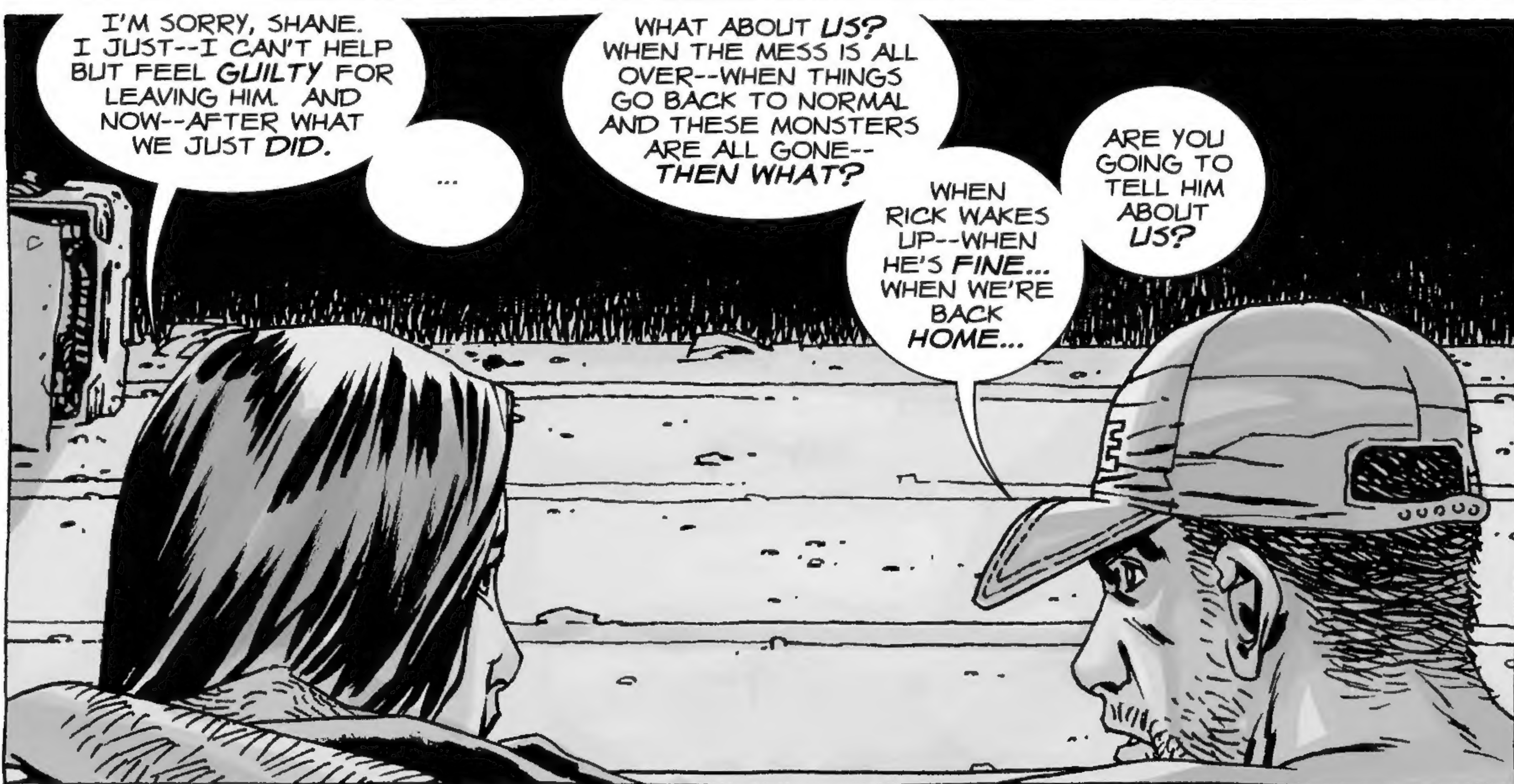
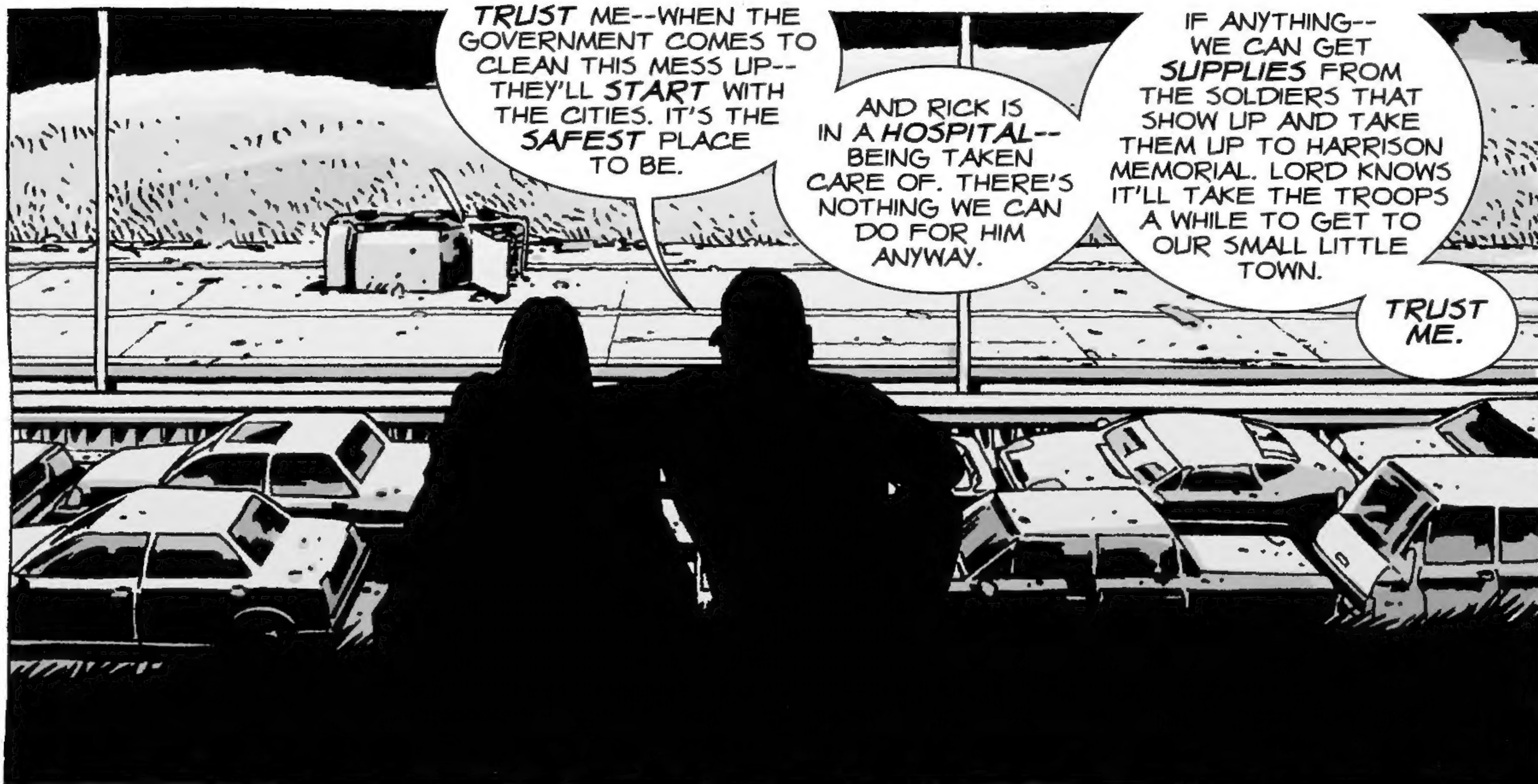
















WHAT  
ARE YOU  
THINKING  
ABOUT?

WE WERE  
TALKING ABOUT  
ATLANTA--WHEN  
I FIRST SHOWED  
UP AT THE  
CAMP. THEN  
YOU ZONED  
OUT.

WHAT?

WHAT  
ARE YOU  
THINKING  
ABOUT?

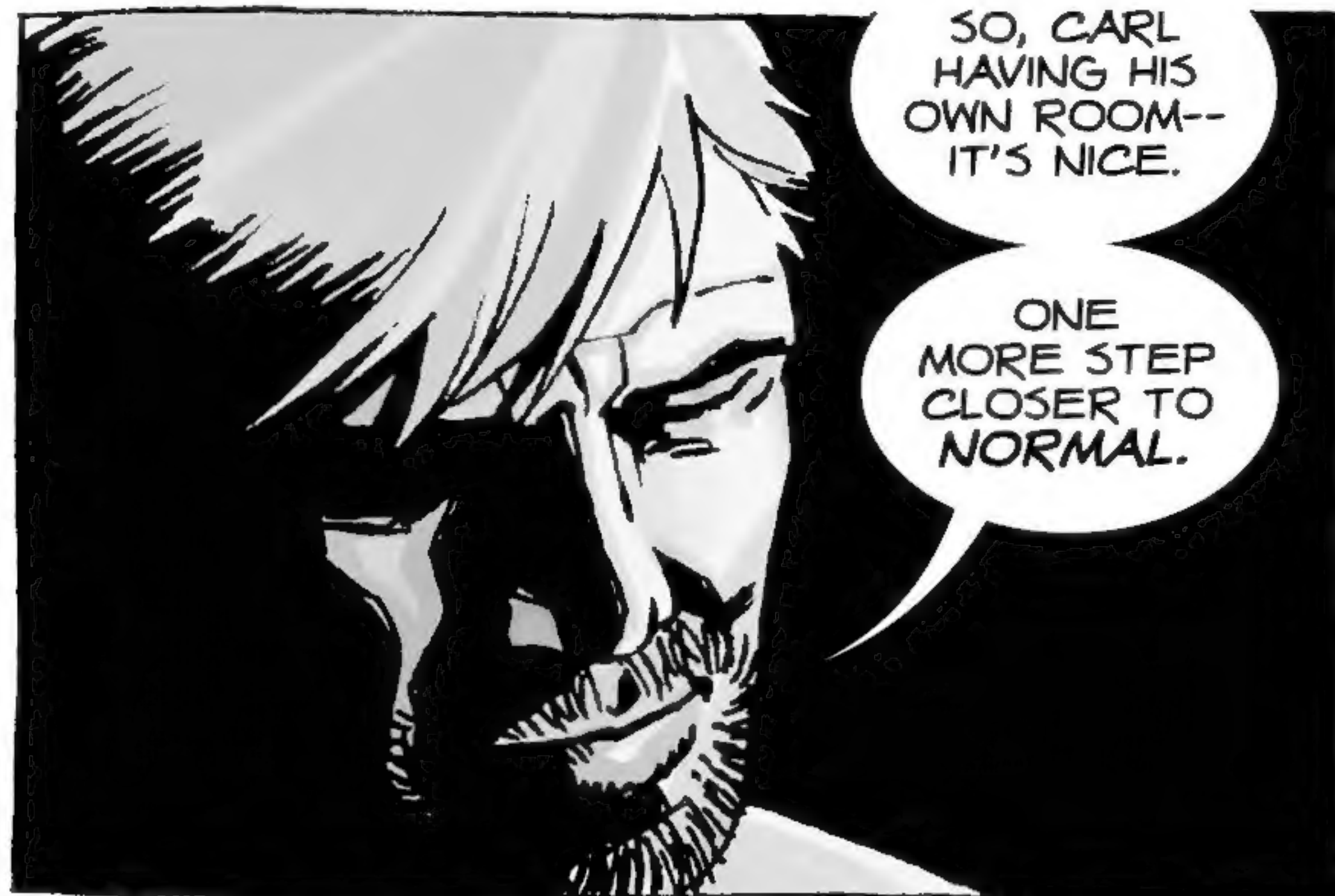




OH, NOTHING.  
JUST...

DWELLING.

WE'VE BEEN  
THROUGH A LOT  
THESE PAST  
MONTHS. I WAS  
JUST THINKING  
ABOUT IT  
ALL...



SO, CARL  
HAVING HIS  
OWN ROOM--  
IT'S NICE.

ONE  
MORE STEP  
CLOSER TO  
NORMAL.



YEAH,  
I--UNG.

YOU  
GOT IT--  
NEED  
HELP?

I'M  
FINE.



AFTER THIS LAST TIME  
WITH YOU GONE--WHEN  
YOU WERE IN WOODBURY--  
I DIDN'T THINK HE'D  
EVER START SLEEPING  
BY HIMSELF.

IT'S NICE  
TO BE ALONE  
WITH YOU  
SOMETIMES.



OH!



THE BABY  
AT IT  
AGAIN?

YEAH,  
HE'S KICKING  
LIKE **CRAZY**  
TODAY.

HE'S  
BEEN--

I'M DOING  
IT AGAIN AREN'T  
I? I CAN'T STOP  
CALLING HIM A "HE."  
I CAN'T BRING MYSELF  
TO SAY "IT." THAT  
JUST DOESN'T SEEM  
**RIGHT**. BUT WE DON'T  
REALLY KNOW--DO  
WE? IT COULD BE  
A **GIRL**. THAT'D BE  
NICE--TO HAVE  
**BOTH**.

I GUESS  
IT'S BECAUSE  
OF CARL--I'M  
JUST USED  
TO SAYING **HE**  
AND **HIM**.

I WISH  
WE **KNEW**. OF  
COURSE--IT'S  
NOT LIKE WE'VE  
GOT A **NURSERY**  
TO PAINT OR  
ANYTHING...





I'VE GOT TO  
MAKE A CRIB--  
A BASSINET--  
SOMETHING.



I'VE BEEN SO  
PREOCCUPIED  
WITH EVERYTHING  
ELSE--I HAVEN'T  
EVEN *THOUGHT*  
ABOUT ALL THIS  
STUFF.

THERE'S  
SO MUCH WE  
*NEED*--SO  
MUCH WE  
HAVE TO  
DO.

CALM DOWN--  
WE'LL BE *FINE*.  
WE'VE GOT  
SOME TIME.

WE'LL FIGURE  
EVERYTHING OUT.  
NOW IT'S LATE--  
WE'VE GOT A BIG  
DAY AHEAD OF US  
TOMORROW--LET'S  
GET SOME  
*SLEEP*.



YEAH--  
BIG DAY.

I'M  
*BEAT*.



GOOD  
NIGHT,  
RICK.







YOU'RE UP EARLY. THE PLACE IS STARTING TO LOOK NICE.

HUH?

OH--  
YEAH. IT'S ACTUALLY A PRETTY NICE FACILITY.



I DIDN'T EXPECT A PRISON TO BE SO **WELL-EQUIPPED**. I MEAN--THEY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING **SPECIFICALLY** FOR CHILD BIRTH BUT THERE IS A LOT OF EQUIPMENT I'LL BE ABLE TO USE.

I THINK LORI AND THE BABY WILL BE FINE.

AND ONCE I GET EVERYTHING INVENTORIED AND ORGANIZED WE SHOULD BE READY TO HANDLE JUST ABOUT **ANYTHING**. THERE'S EVEN SOME MEDICAL BOOKS UP HERE THAT I'M GOING TO READ.

I'VE STILL GOT A LOT TO LEARN.

I'M **CAROL**, BY THE WAY. I'M SOPHIA'S MOTHER--THE LITTLE GIRL HERE. I DON'T THINK WE'VE BEEN INTRODUCED OR HAD A CHANCE TO TALK YET.

YEAH--SORRY ABOUT THAT. I GUESS THAT'S MY **FAULT** MORE THAN ANYTHING. AT WOODBURY THERE WERE ENOUGH OF US THAT WE DIDN'T FEEL THE NEED TO KNOW EVERYONE.

I HAVEN'T REALLY TALKED TO MANY PEOPLE AT ALL SINCE I GOT BACK.

I KINDA GOT **USED** TO KEEPING TO MYSELF.

OH, DON'T WORRY. NOBODY'S OFFENDED OR ANYTHING--CERTAINLY NOT **ME**, I JUST WANTED TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.

YOU SEEM LIKE A **NICE** PERSON.

THANKS-- I REALLY APPRECIATE THAT.

I THINK WE'LL GET ALONG **REALLY** WELL...







YOU  
DECENT,  
PATRICIA?

DECENT  
ENOUGH.  
COME ON  
IN.

YOU OKAY? I JUST  
WANTED TO CHECK  
ON YOU. WE HAVEN'T  
REALLY TALKED IN  
A WHILE.

YOU ALL  
RIGHT?

SURE, BILLY. I'M JUST  
THINKING ABOUT OTIS.  
WASN'T MUCH FUSS MADE  
OVER HIS DEATH--I  
GUESS PEOPLE ARE  
JUST GETTING *USED*  
TO IT. STILL--IT'S  
A *SHAME*.

HE WAS  
A COMPLETE  
*PRICK* MOST OF  
THE TIME--BUT  
HE WAS THE  
CLOSEST THING  
I HAD TO A  
*FRIEND* OUT  
HERE.

I'M SORRY FOR THAT.  
MY DAD, ME--MAGGIE.  
WE WERE, LIKE EVERYONE  
ELSE, MAD ABOUT YOU  
PULLING THAT SHIT WITH  
THOSE PRISONERS, BUT  
WE *ALL* DONE SOMETHING  
WE *AIN'T* PROUD OF.  
NOBODY'S PERFECT.

WE'RE  
STILL YOUR  
FRIENDS. I'LL  
TRY TO START  
ACTING  
LIKE IT.

YOU'RE  
COMING TO  
MY SISTER'S  
WEDDING,  
RIGHT?

WASN'T  
INVITED.

I WASN'T INVITED *EITHER*  
BUT I'M GONNA BE THERE.  
I THINK PEOPLE ARE JUST  
ASSUMING EVERYONE'S  
COMING.

WEREN'T NO  
INVITATIONS *MADE*,  
Y'KNOW? SO--YOU  
WANT TO COME?  
I KNOW MAGGIE'D  
WANT YOU THERE--  
WAS A TIME YOU WAS  
LIKE A MOM--OR AT  
LEAST AN OLDER  
*SISTER* TO  
HER.

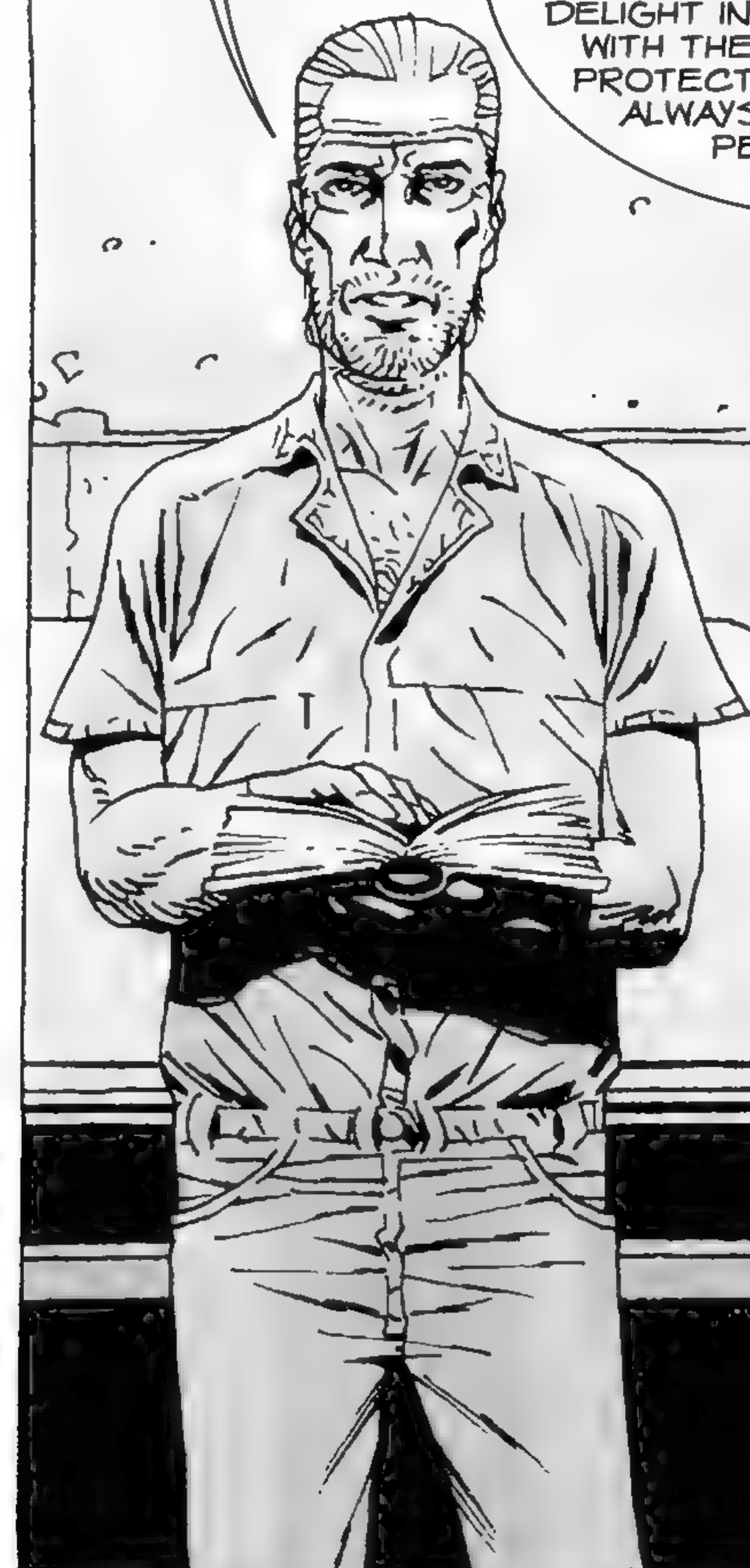
I DON'T  
KNOW.

WHEN  
IS IT?



IF I SPEAK IN THE TONGUES OF MEN AND OF ANGELS, BUT HAVE NOT LOVE, I AM ONLY A RESOUNDING GONG OR A CLANGING CYMBAL. IF I HAVE THE GIFT OF PROPHECY AND CAN FATHOM ALL MYSTERIES AND ALL KNOWLEDGE, AND IF I HAVE A FAITH THAT CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS, BUT HAVE NOT LOVE, I AM NOTHING. IF I GIVE ALL I POSSESS TO THE POOR AND SURRENDER MY BODY TO THE FLAMES, BUT HAVE NOT LOVE, I GAIN NOTHING.

LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND. IT DOES NOT ENVY, IT DOES NOT BOAST, IT IS NOT PROUD. IT IS NOT RUDE, IT IS NOT SELF-SEEKING, IT IS NOT EASILY ANGERED, IT KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS. LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH. IT ALWAYS PROTECTS, ALWAYS TRUSTS, ALWAYS HOPES, ALWAYS PERSEVERES.



THESE TWO HAVE PREPARED THEIR OWN VOWS.



MAGGIE, MY LOVE, I PROMISE TO PROTECT YOU, AND HONOR YOU-- AND KEEP YOU SAFE, AND PROTECT--UM-- AND I VOW TO LOVE YOU FOR AS LONG AS I HAVE LEFT AND TO DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO ENSURE THAT IS A LONG TIME.

TODAY, A DAY OF LOVE AND CELEBRATION OF LOVE, I PLEDGE TO SHARE MY LIFE WITH YOU. WHETHER THE DAYS TO COME ARE HAPPY OR SAD, I WILL LIVE THEM WITH YOU. GLENN, I GIVE MYSELF TO YOU AS YOUR WIFE.

MAGGIE, DO YOU TAKE THIS MAN TO BE YOUR LAWFULLY WEDDED HUSBAND TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, TO HONOR AND CHERISH 'TIL DEATH DO YOU PART?

I DO.



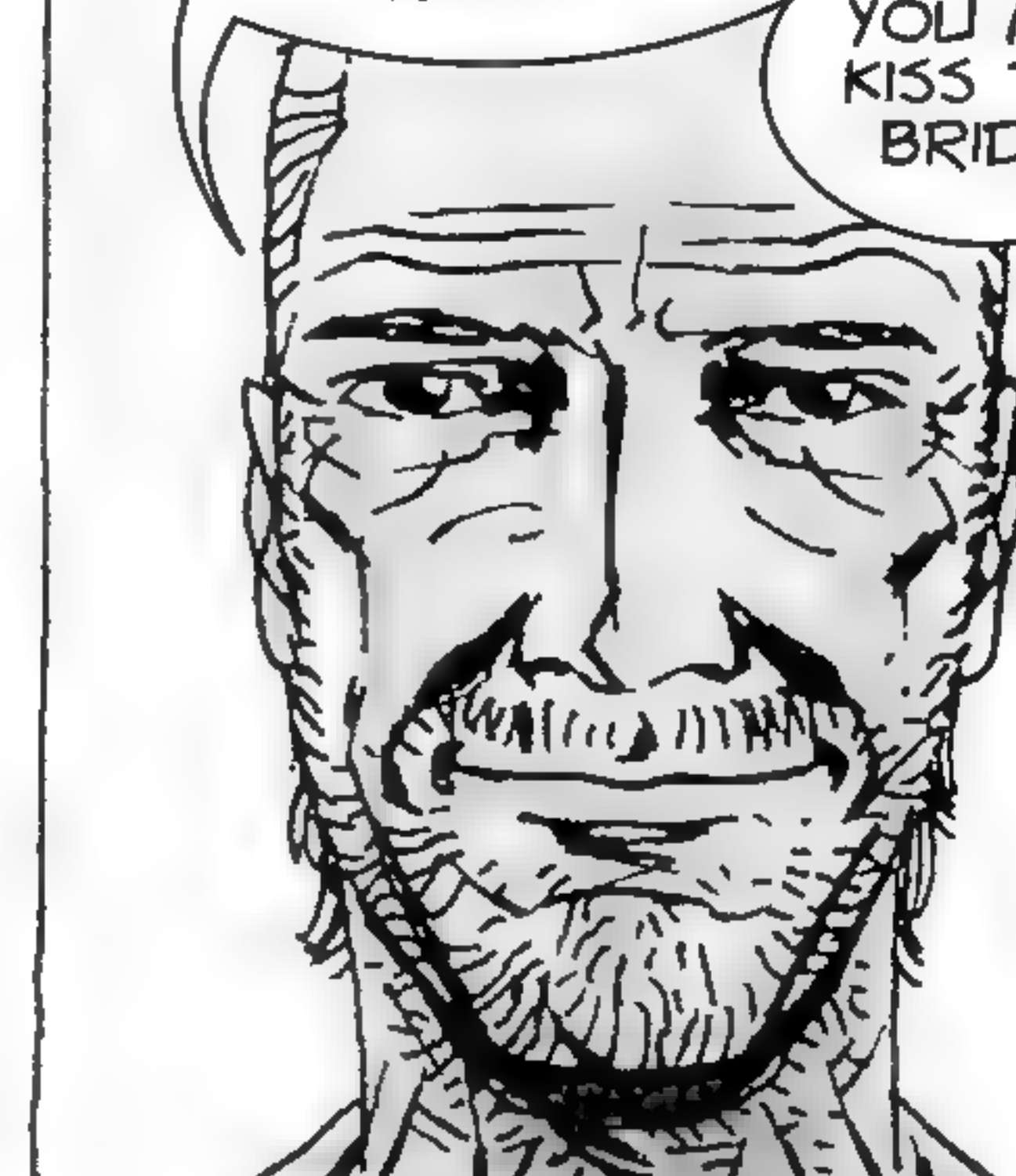
GLENN, DO YOU TAKE THIS WOMAN TO BE YOUR LAWFULLY WEDDED WIFE TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, TO HONOR AND CHERISH 'TIL DEATH DO YOU PART?

I DO.



THEN BY THE POWERS VESTED IN ME BY THE UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LIVES AND THE GOOD LORD ABOVE--I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU HUSBAND AND WIFE.

YOU MAY KISS THE BRIDE.





THAT WAS NICE--  
I MEAN, I DON'T  
WANT TO SOUND ALL  
GIRLY OR ANYTHING  
BUT THAT WAS A NICE  
CEREMONY. I MEAN--  
MUCH NICER THAN  
I EVER THOUGHT  
IT COULD BE.

HEH, YEAH--  
IT WAS ONE  
FOR THE  
HISTORY BOOKS.

YEAH...  
MY "DRESS"  
WAS TOTALLY  
PRETTY.

SO...

WE'RE  
MARRIED  
NOW,  
HUH?

YEAH...  
MARRIED.



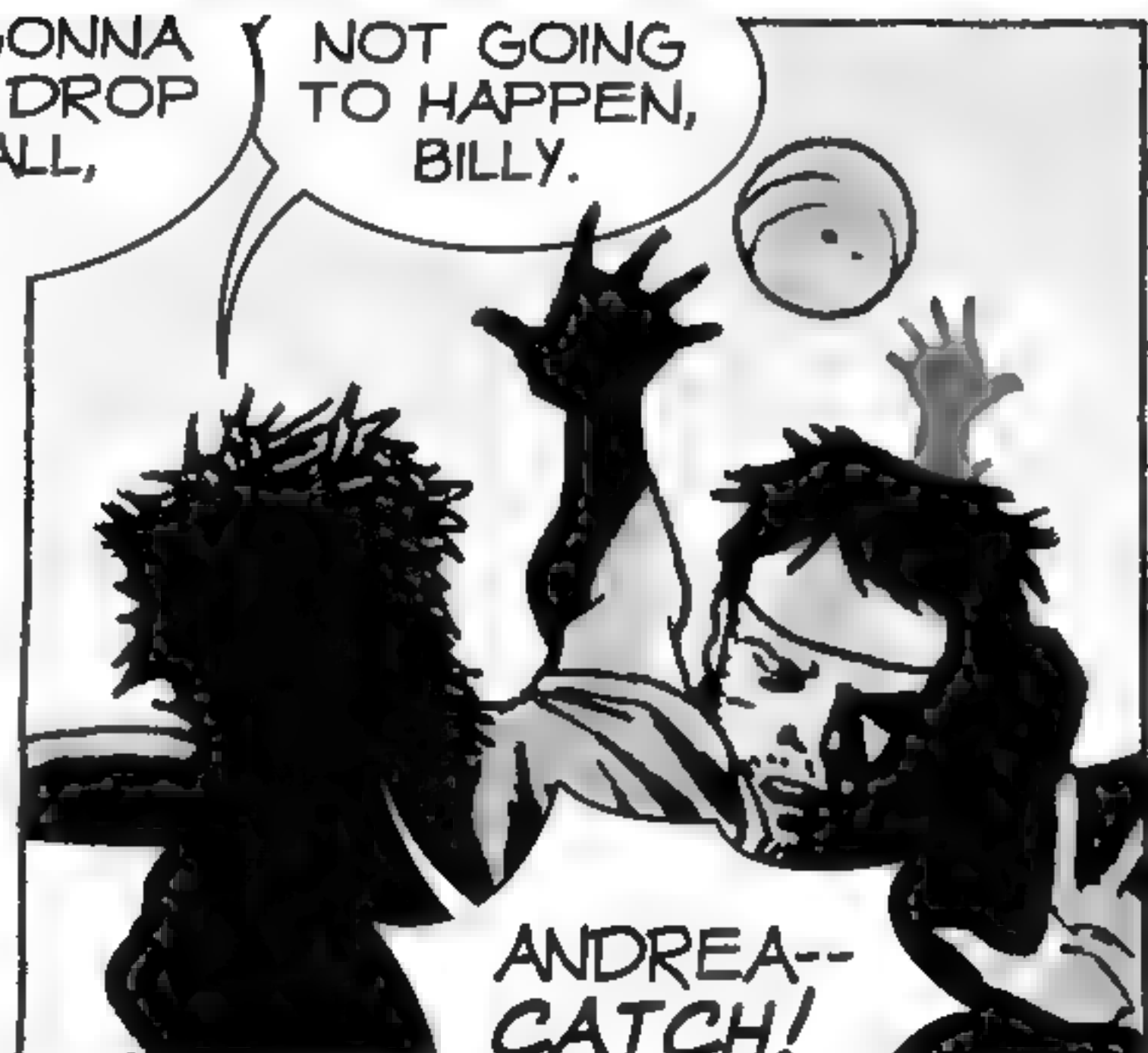
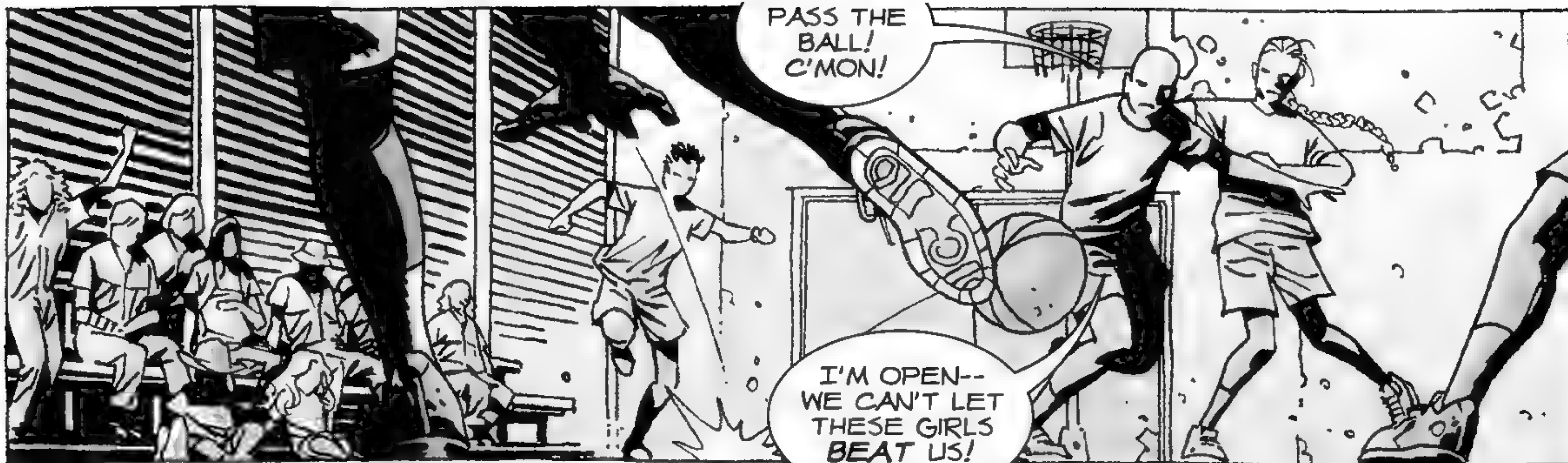
C'MERE,  
HUSBAND!

OOF!













GO GIRLS!! GO!!  
YOU CAN DO IT!!  
BEAT THEM!  
BEAT THEM!!

SHE FOUND MORE CLOTHES.  
THAT'S WHERE THEY GOT THE  
SHORTS AND THE T-SHIRTS. THE  
PRISON KEPT ATHLETIC WEAR  
FOR THE INMATES TOO. THEY'VE  
GOT SWEATPANTS AND  
STUFF ALSO.

GOOD,  
GOD.

OH,  
YEAH?



ANDREA IS SAYING THAT  
SHE'S GOT **ALL KINDS** OF  
MATERIAL TO MAKE STUFF  
WITH NOW. SHE'S GOING TO  
BE MAKING SOME WINTER  
COATS FOR ALL THE KIDS.  
SHE ASKED ME TO HELP  
HER. ONCE THE KIDS ARE  
TAKEN CARE OF I THINK  
SHE'S GOING TO START  
MAKING STUFF  
FOR US.

YEAH--  
I GUESS  
SHE'S JUST  
BEEN TOO  
BUSY.

I WISH SHE'D  
MAKE ME SOME  
MATERNITY CLOTHES.  
WALKING AROUND  
LIKE **THIS** IS NOT  
FUN.



WHY AREN'T YOU  
PLAYING, DAD?  
YOU'D REALLY KICK  
THEIR BUTTS.

OH. I  
FORGOT.



SORRY.



IT'S OKAY, SON.  
DON'T LET IT  
UPSET YOU. I'M  
**FINE** WITH IT.  
DON'T LET IT  
MAKE YOU FEEL  
UNCOMFORTABLE.

IT'S  
JUST A  
BIG **BOO-  
BOO**.

OKAY,  
DAD.

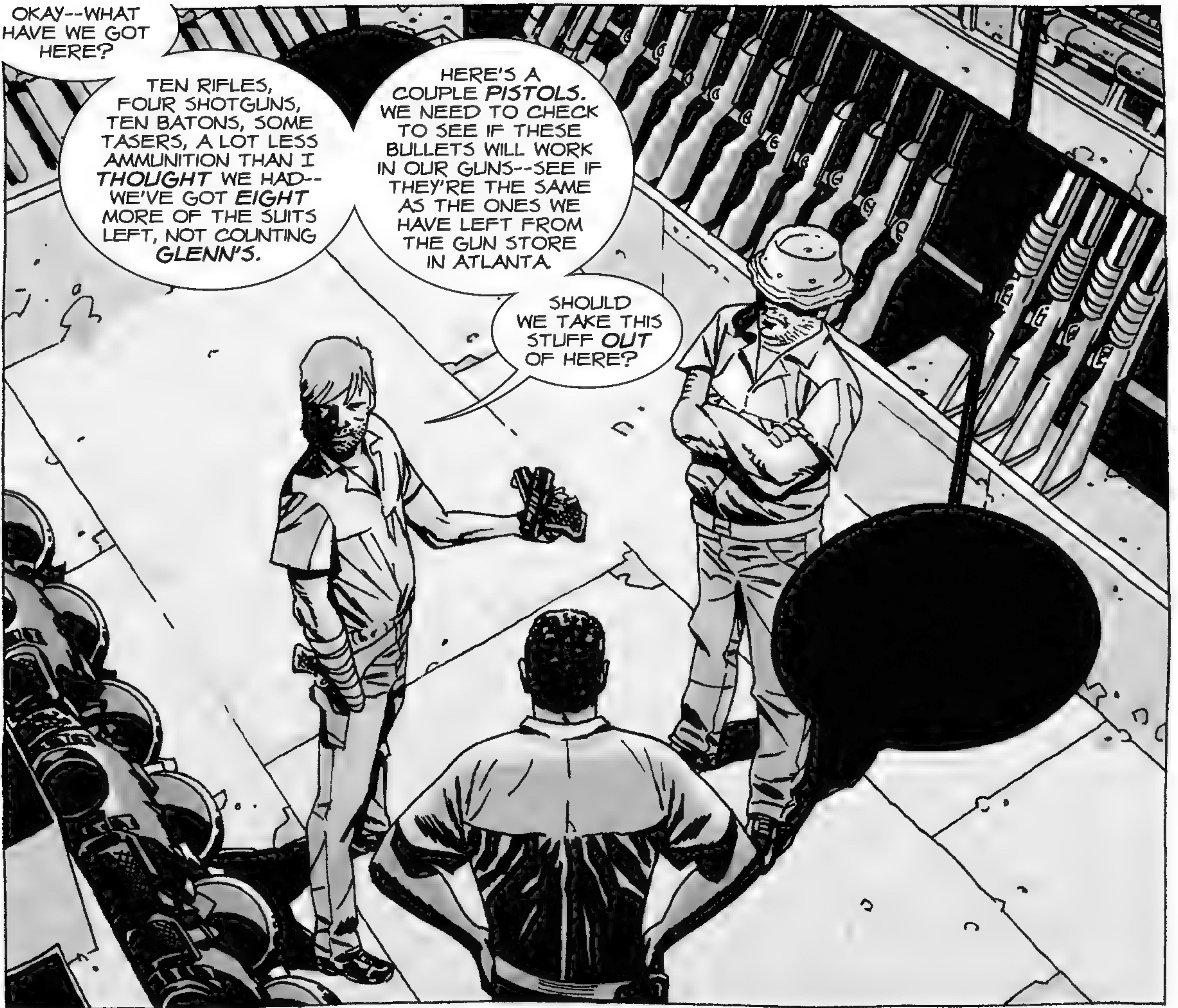


OKAY--WHAT  
HAVE WE GOT  
HERE?

TEN RIFLES,  
FOUR SHOTGUNS,  
TEN BATONS, SOME  
TASERS, A LOT LESS  
AMMUNITION THAN I  
*THOUGHT* WE HAD--  
WE'VE GOT *EIGHT*  
MORE OF THE SUITS  
LEFT, NOT COUNTING  
*GLENN'S*.

HERE'S A  
COUPLE *PISTOLS*.  
WE NEED TO CHECK  
TO SEE IF THESE  
BULLETS WILL WORK  
IN OUR GUNS--SEE IF  
THEY'RE THE SAME  
AS THE ONES WE  
HAVE LEFT FROM  
THE GUN STORE  
IN ATLANTA.

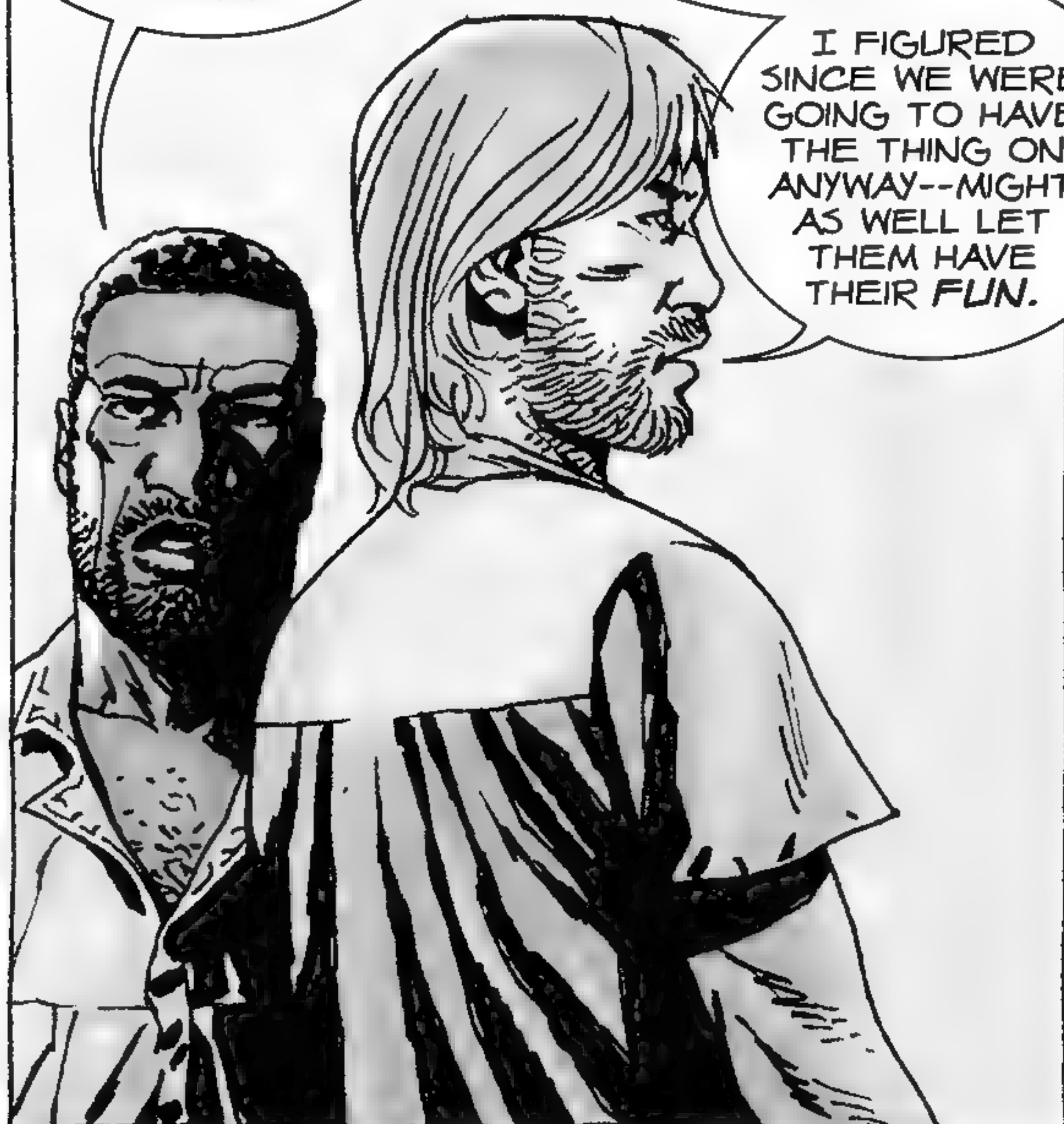
SHOULD  
WE TAKE THIS  
STUFF *OUT*  
OF HERE?



I DON'T KNOW--  
BUT HAVING THE  
GENERATOR ON TO  
TAKE INVENTORY ON  
OUR WEAPONS IS  
WASTING GAS--  
WE NEED TO  
*HURRY*.

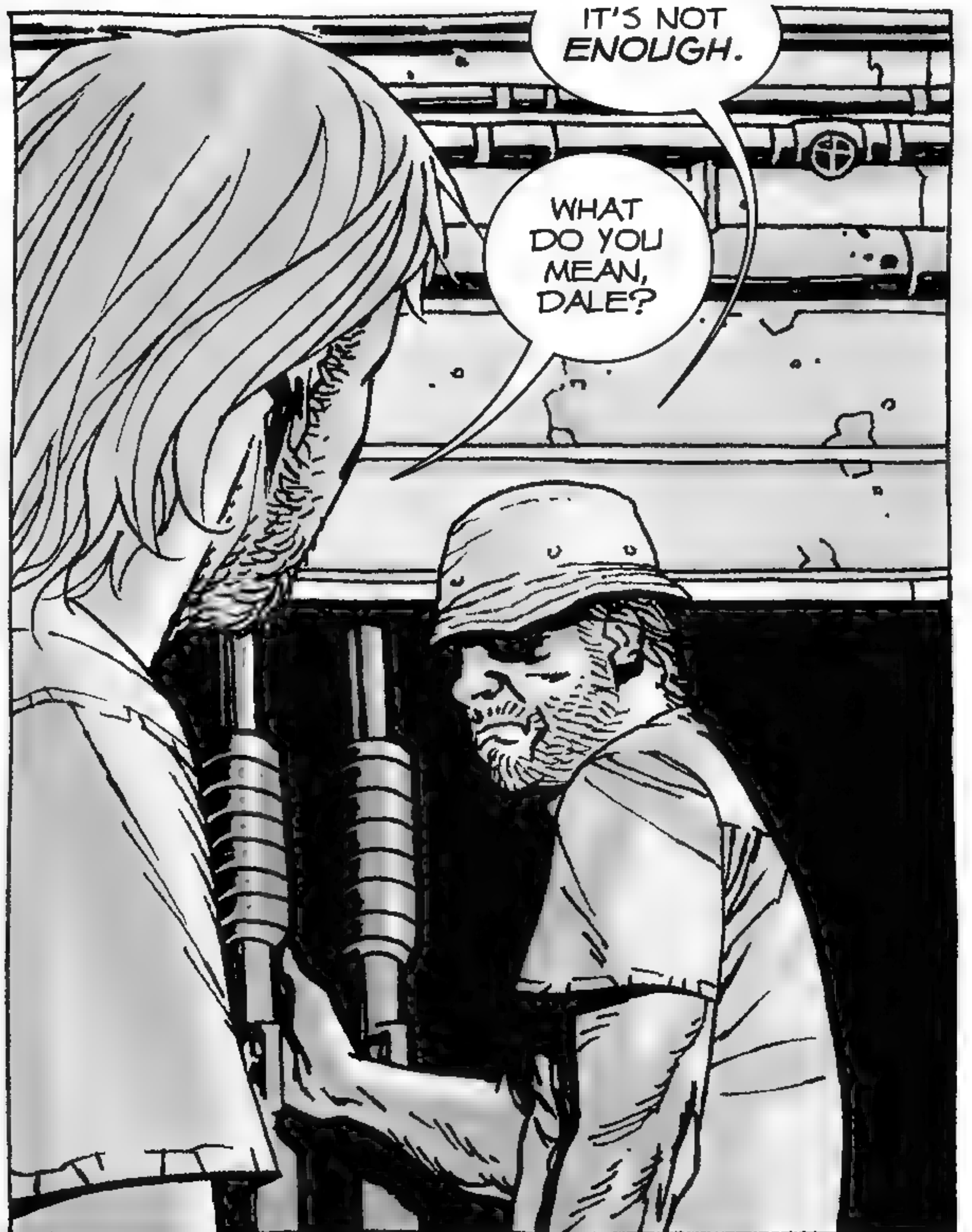
DON'T SWEAT IT, THE  
KIDS ARE WATCHING  
*TURNER AND HOOCH*  
WITH EVERYONE ELSE--  
WE'VE GOT EXACTLY  
ONE-HUNDRED MINUTES--  
ACCORDING TO  
THE BOX.

I FIGURED  
SINCE WE WERE  
GOING TO HAVE  
THE THING ON  
ANYWAY--MIGHT  
AS WELL LET  
THEM HAVE  
THEIR *FUN*.



IT'S NOT  
*ENOUGH*.

WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN,  
DALE?





WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH. FROM WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ABOUT WOODBURY-- WE CAN'T DEFEND OURSELVES.

YOU SAY THEY'VE GOT AN ENTIRE STAFF OF GUARDS POSTED AT EVERY FENCE, TRAINED TO USE RIFLES--READY TO DEFEND THAT PLACE? HOW MANY GUYS IS THAT? TEN? TWENTY?

WE PRETTY MUCH JUST SIT BEHIND OUR FENCES AND PLAY CARDS-- WE AREN'T PREPARED FOR THIS--AND I KNEW THAT... BUT NOW IT'S CLEAR TO ME--

WE DON'T HAVE THE WEAPONS TO DO THIS EVEN IF WE WERE PREPARED.

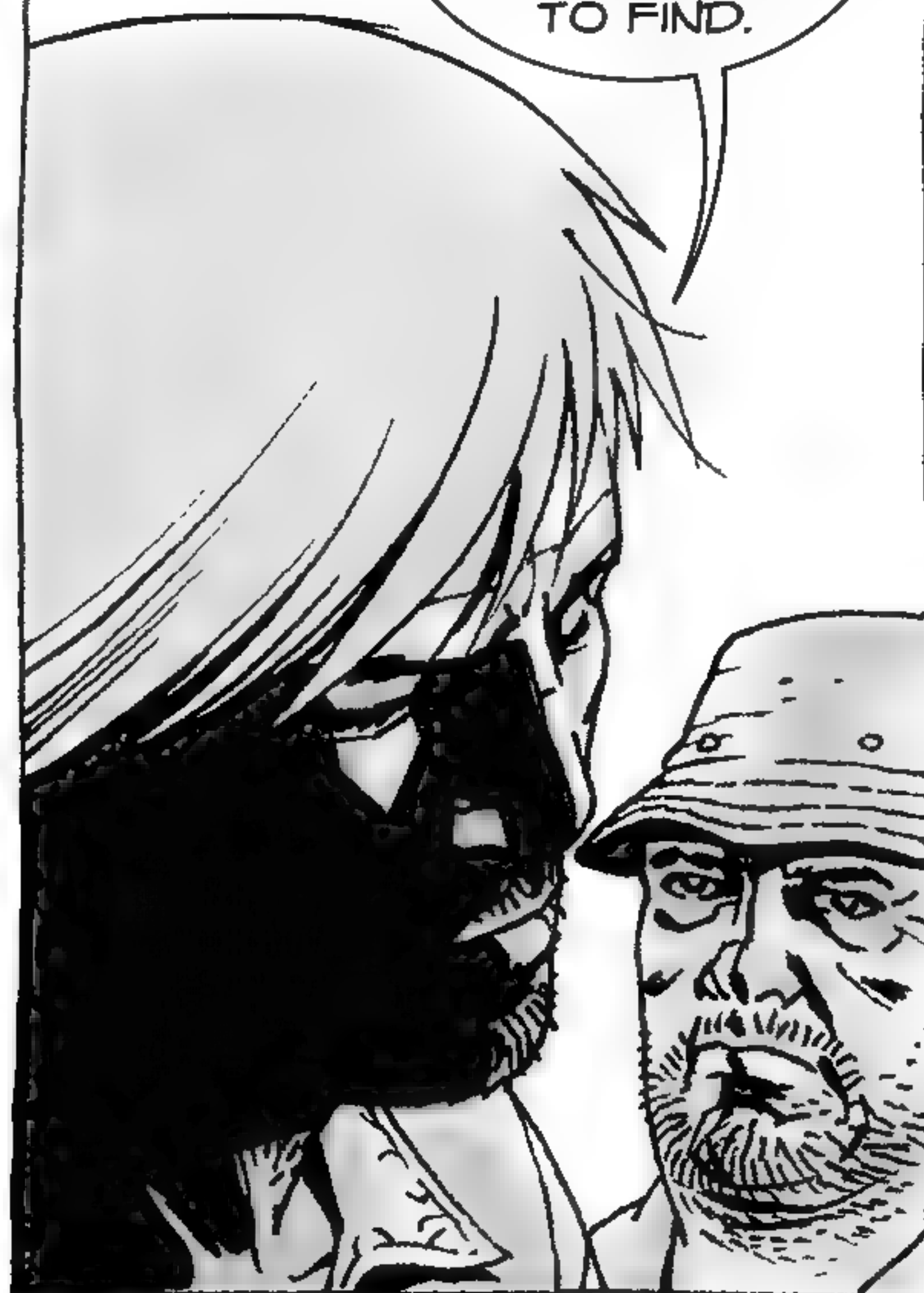


I CAN'T SAY I DISAGREE WITH YOU BUT WHAT CAN WE DO TO FIX THAT? I'M AT A LOSS.

YEAH-- YOU GOT ANY IDEAS?

YEAH, ONE. THE NATIONAL GUARD STATION. IF IT'S CLOSE TO THEIR TOWN--WE CAN FIND IT--TAKE WHATEVER THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY TAKEN.

BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS. IT COULD TAKE A WHILE TO FIND.



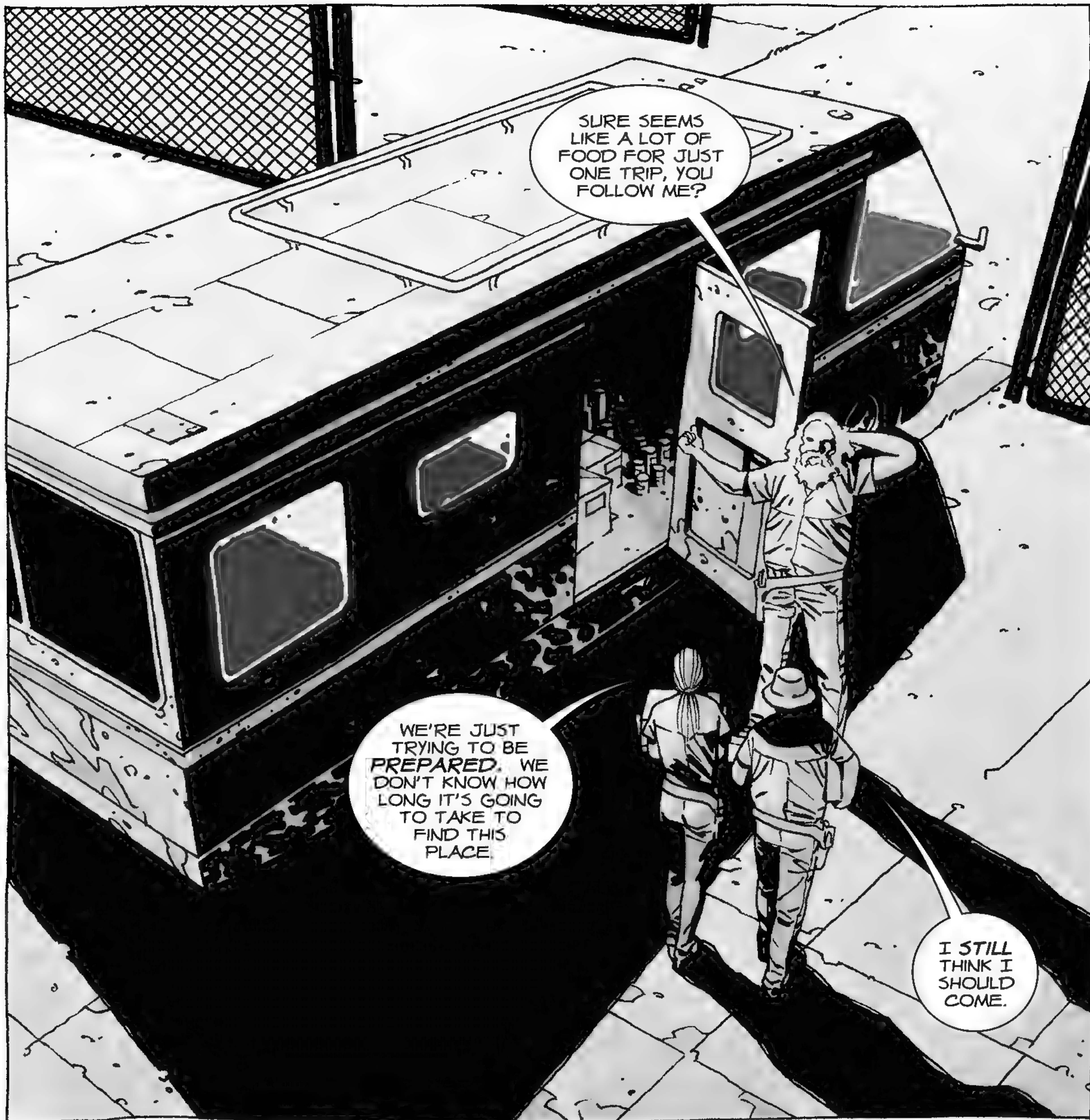
IF THEY'RE LOOKING FOR US, I THINK WE SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR THAT.

IF WE DON'T GET MORE WEAPONS, WE'RE SCREWED.

I AGREE--WE SHOULD GET ON THE ROAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.







SURE SEEMS  
LIKE A LOT OF  
FOOD FOR JUST  
ONE TRIP, YOU  
FOLLOW ME?

WE'RE JUST  
TRYING TO BE  
**PREPARED**. WE  
DON'T KNOW HOW  
LONG IT'S GOING  
TO TAKE TO  
FIND THIS  
PLACE.

I **STILL**  
THINK I  
SHOULD  
COME.

I KNOW, BUT WHO'S GOING  
TO WATCH **THE TWINS** IF WE  
**BOTH** GO? I DON'T WANT TO  
LEAVE THEM **ALONE**--NOT  
AFTER LOSING THEIR PARENTS  
AND I'M NOT GOING  
TO TAKE THEM  
WITH US.

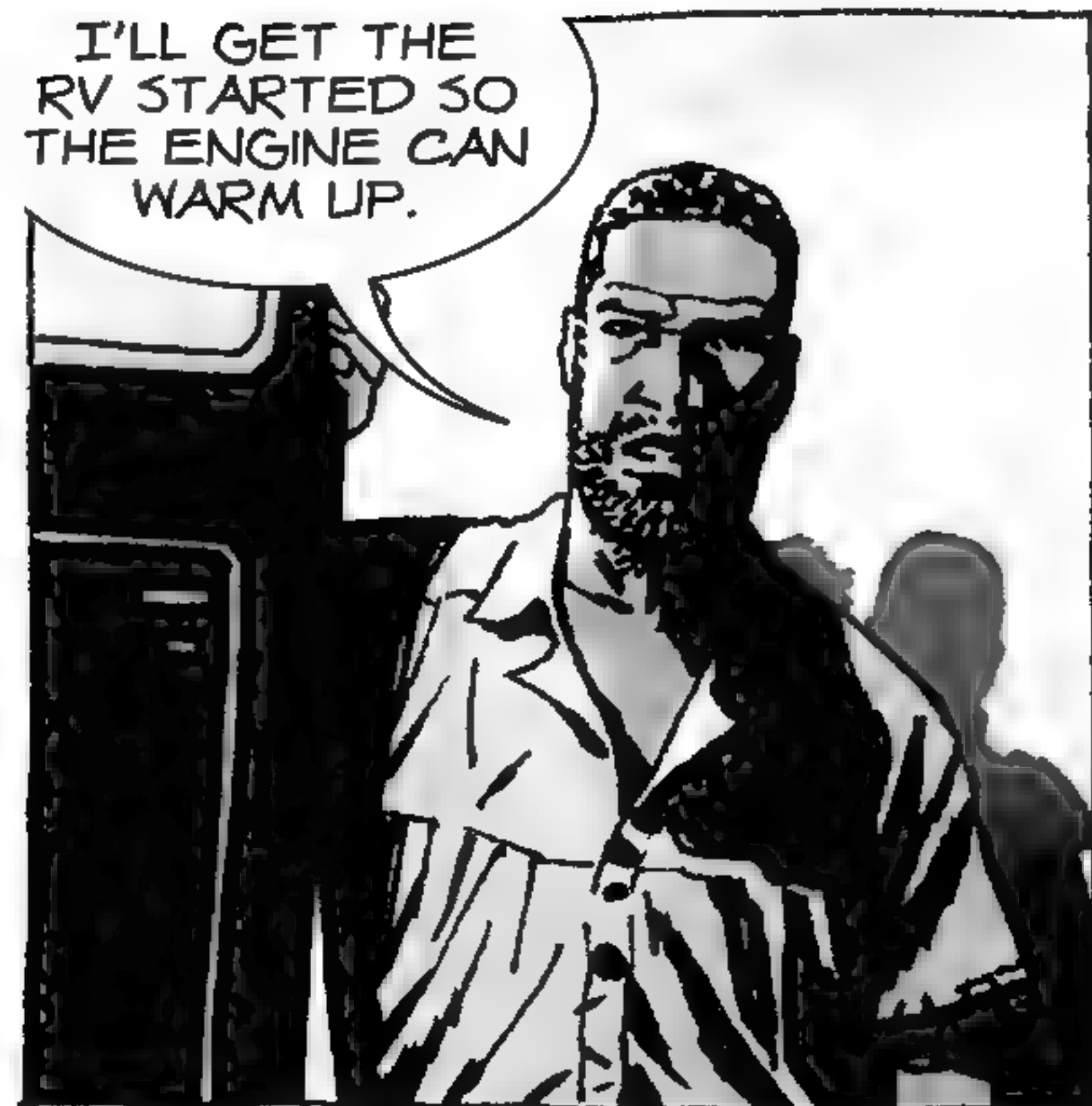
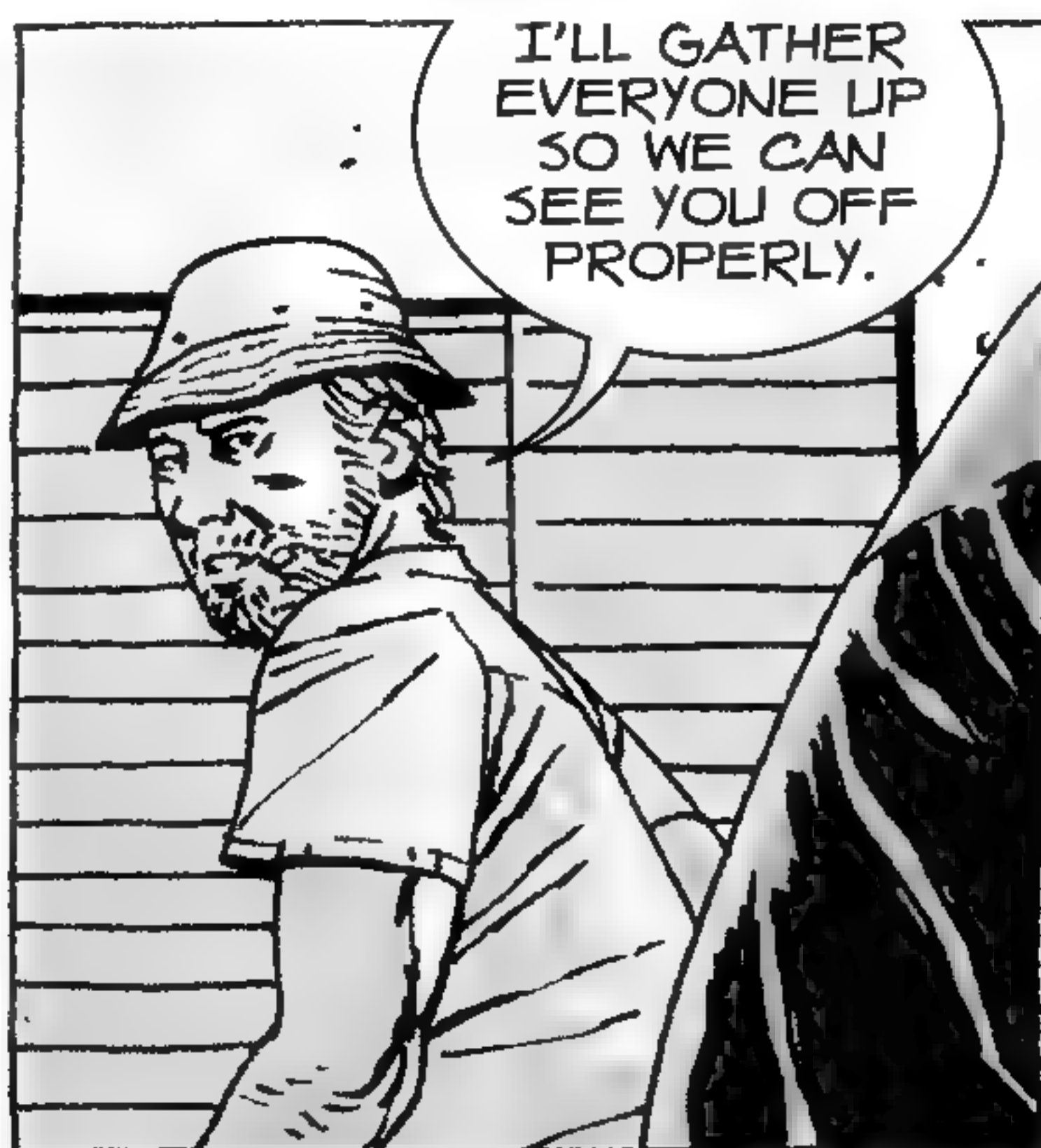
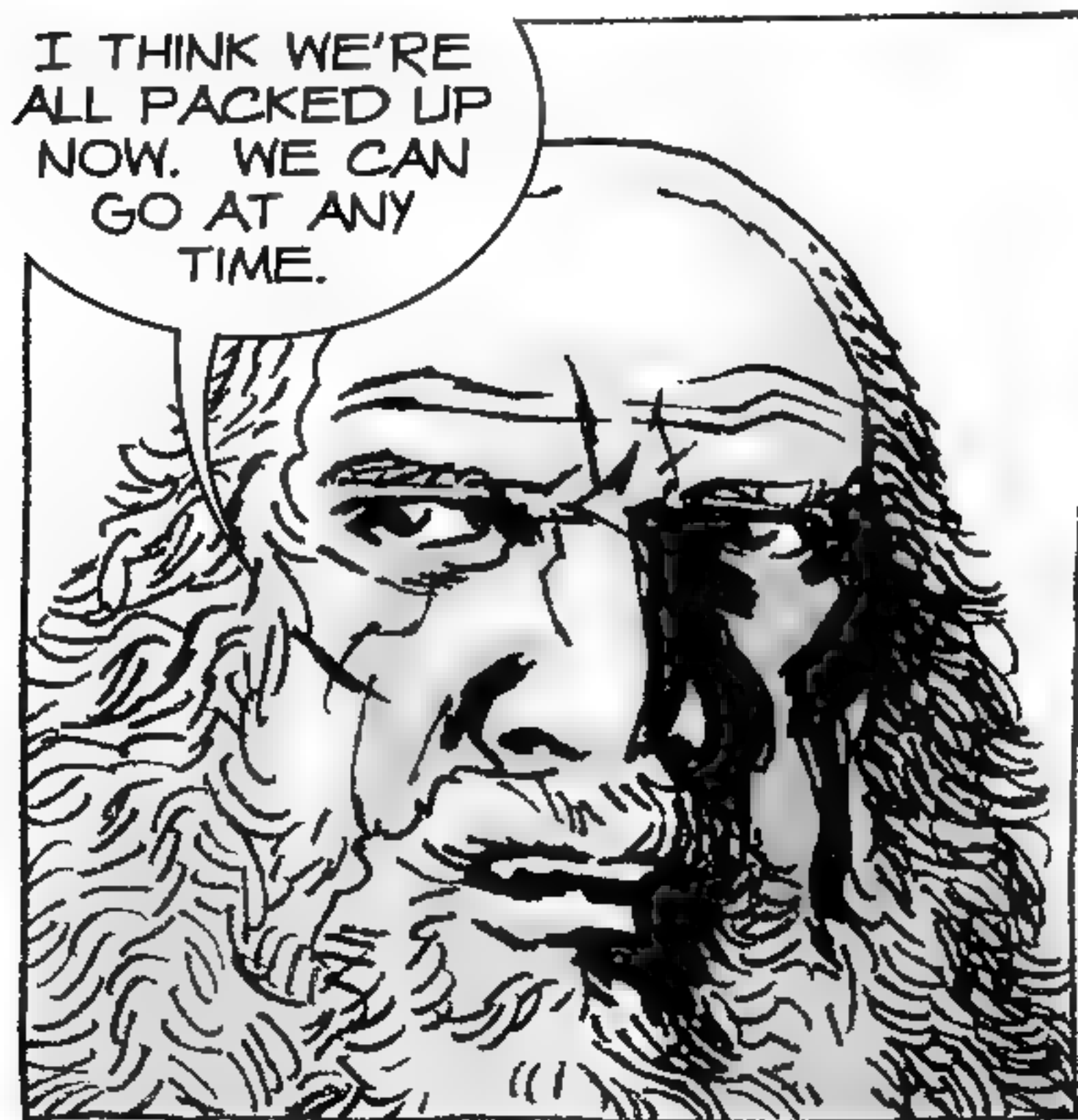
BESIDES--  
TYREESE CAN DRIVE  
THE RV AND NOBODY  
CAN SHARP-SHOOT  
LIKE I CAN. THIS IS  
FOR THE BEST--  
YOU KNOW  
THAT.

SURE, SURE.  
I STILL DON'T  
LIKE IT. YOU  
BETTER COME  
BACK TO ME.  
UNDERSTAND?

DON'T  
WORRY.  
I'LL BE  
**FINE**.









IT STINKS  
IN HERE.







THIS *SUCKS*,  
ASIDE FROM  
ALL THE  
OBVIOUS  
REASON, I  
MEAN.

I FEEL  
*USELESS*.  
I CAN'T DO  
*ANYTHING*,  
WELL, MOST  
ANYTHING.

I FEEL *GUILTY*, I  
KNOW I SHOULDN'T,  
BUT I CAN'T HELP IT.  
KNOWING THEY'RE OUT  
THERE, RISKING THEIR  
LIVES, LOOKING FOR  
THAT NATIONAL GUARD  
STATION--I FEEL  
LIKE I SHOULD  
*BE* THERE.

I  
SHOULD  
BE WITH  
THEM.

ARE  
YOU READY  
FOR BED?

I JUST NEED TO FINISH  
WRAPPING THIS THING UP.  
ALICE TELLS ME I DON'T  
CHANGE THIS BANDAGE  
OFTEN ENOUGH.

LAST THING  
I NEED RIGHT  
NOW IS AN  
*INFECTION*.



RICK,  
I--

...

YEAH?

LORI? IS  
EVERYTHING  
OKAY?





I NEED  
TO TALK TO  
YOU ABOUT  
SHANE.



# NEXT ISSUE

Prepare for war...



Cliff 906



# LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD  
C/O FUNK-O-TRON  
P.O. BOX 54386  
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

Welcome to issue 37--I hope you enjoyed it. We're going to be taking a short break from answering mail this issue to run an interview I recently did with Andrea Voglino for "Alias/Il manifesto". This is going to be translated up for the Italian press but I figured I'd run it here for all you English speakers to take a gander at.

Enjoy!

1) You are considered one of America's "enfant prodige" comic writers. Tell us something about your first steps into the comic field.

My first step was getting a job at a comic shop during my senior year of high school. I worked at Red Rock Collectables in Lexington, Kentucky for two years. That was the first thing I did. While there, I learned how Diamond, the comic book distributor here in the United States, got books to the store, and how that worked out, how that generated a profit, I really paid attention to how everything from a retailer point of view worked out.

The comics biz is really simple. It's creator to publisher to distributor to retailer to reader. It's pretty easy to make those five steps happen on a SMALL scale. So I eventually became a publisher. I started Funk-O-Tron, my publishing company when I was twenty, about a year after I quit working at the comic shop and two years after graduating high school.

I published comics for two years. At first as a side job and later, I quit my day job at a lighting warehouse and started publishing full time. I published Battle Pope, which I wrote (and later republished in color at Image Comics) and a few other books I didn't work on.

Eventually, Battle Pope got me noticed at Image Comics. That allowed me to start writing more, because I didn't have to worry about publishing the work. I did a SuperPatriot mini-series for Erik Larsen and that led to me doing Tech Jacket, Invincible, Capes, Brit, The Walking Dead,

Cloudfall and Reaper at Image.

After working at Image for about a year or so some people at Marvel started to notice the work I was doing on Invincible at Image. Then The Walking Dead was a big success and Marvel started offering me work. I started on an ill-fated Sleepwalker series for their Marvel Epic imprint but that was cancelled before it came out and only the first issue was released (I wrote three issues). Then I was offered a Jubilee series, which I did, and a short run on Captain America. After that Marvel offered me an exclusive contract, but allowed me to continue working on Invincible and The Walking Dead.

That more or less brings us up to date.

2) From EC's "Shock Suspense Stories" to Marvel's "Tales Of The Zombie", from Dracula to Constantine, the American comic book scene has proven to be a real gold mine for the fans of the undead. Who are your favourite scare comics authors of the past? Let's talk a bit about the ones who've mostly influenced your vision.

I hate to admit it but I haven't read a whole heck of a lot of horror comics. I've read an odd issue or two of EC's old Tales from the Crypt series but I couldn't even begin to guess the creative team on that. I started reading comics in 1990 when I was 11 or 12 years old. By that time there weren't a lot of horror comics running and really, I got most of my comics at Wal-Mart for the first few years I collected so it was mostly Marvel comics and a few DC comics... that was all I had to choose from. The closest thing to horror comics I probably read was the first Batman/Predator crossover drawn by Andy Kubert... or really, I guess Hellboy would count.

I draw most of my horror inspiration from movies, more or less. Zombie movies, vampire movies, monster movies, whatever. I've always been a big fan of George Romero, Wes Craven, John



**Carpenter, Clive Barker, Peter Jackson and the pile of others I'm more than likely forgetting.**

3) Rick Grimes' saga had a great impact notwithstanding the success of the asian horror phenomenon and today's lavish computer-linked books. Did you expect such a success for something so gritty and down-to-earth? How do you explain it?

**Lord no, I didn't expect The Walking Dead to be anything close to the success it has become. At first I wasn't even sure it would last 12 issues. I mean, you can't exactly admit to that while you're trying to promote a book. It was certainly ballsy on my part to promote this comic as "the zombie movie that never ends" when I wasn't sure it'd last more than a year--but y'know you do what you gotta do.**

**I didn't know how the market would react to the book--but more than anything, I just hadn't had a good track record up to that point. Battle Pope never sold well, Tech Jacket had been cancelled at issue six, Invincible was struggling to hang on due to low orders on that book at the time and I had no reason to think The Walking Dead would be any different.**

**I certainly wanted to write the book forever but what I want and what happens are rarely completely in-line with each other.**

**And yet--the book came out and was a near instant success. By the time issue 2 was in stores I had a pretty good feeling that the book was catching on. Sell though at the stores was doing really well and our orders had already started to shoot up, so things were looking good.**

**But even then--I didn't know we'd reach the level we're at now. Our sales on single issues are now at more than triple what our first issue sold and our sales continue to creep up at least a little bit every month. I've got a lot to be thankful for--that's for sure. I try to repay fans who support the book by delivering the best possible stories I can every month and by promising to stick with the book for as long as possible. I don't want to be one of those creators that has a hit and moves on, leaving someone else to handle things. I'd be happy writing this book twenty years from now.**

**I love working on this book.**

4) In the first "Walking Dead" TP intro, you hinted that you're gonna chronicle Rick Grimes adventures for the whole of his life. How can you possibly do that? Did you have a masterplan from the very beginning or you're developing things "on the go"?

**Well, keep in mind, Rick could die at any time--so that would chronicle his**

**adventures for the whole of his life right there. I seriously doubt Rick is going to live to be 80, and at the pace this comic usually runs at that would take about 300 years to reach. We're at issue 37 now and not even nine months have passed. Rick could only have two years to live and that could take another 100 issues to show.**

**Also, I don't think I ever said the book would end if Rick died. It could easily continue after his death.**

**As far as a master plan goes--I don't have one. When I started, I had mapped the book up to about where I am now, actually. I've, of course, changed some things here and there--and I've added stuff, and along the way I've come up with dozens of other things to do with the book that will keep it going and keep in interesting for years to come. I'm constantly thinking of new and horrible things that will happen to these characters. I love them so much, but I love doing terrible things to them.**

**So yeah, I do pretty much write things on the go from issue to issue, but I follow a larger plot I've got mapped out for some time. I like to play things fast and loose, though. That's how life is--we never know what's going to come next. So while I do have a road map--if a side road pops up on the horizon at the last minute, I don't hesitate to go that route knowing that I can eventually get back on the main road at a later date.**

**I keeps things interesting for me and hopefully the readers as well.**

5) How much of yourself do you put in the character of Rick? How much of your personal experiences get on the pages of the books?

**Well, at least a little bit. A lot of things in the book are based on how I think I might react in the situations the characters are put in. But really, half the fun of writing the book is making the characters do things I would never do--it keeps things interesting for me.**

**Now, Rick and his family are from Cynthiana, Kentucky that's where the first issue takes place. He wakes up in Harrison Memorial Hospital. I'm from Cynthiana, that's where I grew up--I got stitches in Harrison Memorial Hospital. The first artist on the book, Tony Moore is from there, too. So the way the places are drawn is more or less accurate as well. There are little changes here and there because I wanted certain things to happen but for the most part it's accurate. So that's a little bit of me in the book.**

**Ultimately, this book is about a group of very different people struggling to live and survive together. I try to make these**



people as different and unique as possible... so at the end of the day there's not much of me in these characters. I worked at a pizza place like Glenn and I was massively in debt at one point like Allen and I'd love to ride around in an RV with two young girls in my later years like Dale, but honestly... that's pretty much it.

**I still have both of my hands.**

6) What's the big difference in working with different artists like Tony Moore and Charlie Adlard? Are there plans to get other artists on board? Who's your "dream artist" for TWD?

**My dream artist is Charlie Adlard, really. Tony drew the first six issues and the first 24 covers. Tony is an amazing artist who I've known since the 7th grade and have worked with on numerous projects. Tony brought a lot to the table for the first volume of this series and I don't think anyone can deny that he's a fantastic artist. The problem was he couldn't keep on schedule with the book, it took him almost a year to do the first six issues and the schedule was starting to catch up to us.**

Tony was getting other offers on other books with looser deadlines and so it was decided that he would move on and just do covers. When it came time to replace Tony I looked at a few artists before I settled on Charlie simply because I didn't think Charlie would do it.

Just to be sure, I offered him the gig and was shocked when he accepted. I had published Charlie's work in an anthology I put out back in the Funk-O-Tron days but never in a million years did I think he'd be willing to hop on *The Walking Dead*. By this point the book was a clear success, and I was able to offer him a guaranteed page rate just based on what our sales were at the time--but I had no idea the book would continue to climb in sales and become the hit it is today--and neither did Charlie. I'd always been a huge fan of Charlie's work. I first encountered his work on Larry Young's *Astronauts in Trouble* but Charlie has been around for YEARS (seriously, he's very old. Heh.). He's done work on nearly every major character at Marvel and DC from Batman to Spider-Man to Green Lantern to, well... you get the idea. I was jumping for joy when he signed on to start the book with issue 7.

And he's so professional and reliable he finished issue 7 right away and dove into issue 8 and got us back on schedule right away.

Charlie's art is much more gritty and dark than Tony's. I think it's a much better fit for what I wanted to do and where I wanted to go with the book. It also worked out that the book got much darker and violent as Charlie came on so

it really worked well with the tone. Charlie really hit his stride early on with the book and has only gotten better and better with every issue.

**So Charlie is it for me. If he ever decides to move on--I'll worry about another artist then, but for now--I'd be happy to have Charlie finish out the book with me... in a few decades or so (he's not THAT old).**

7) "*The Walking Dead*" seems to take direct inspiration from the narrative clichés of all George A. Romero's flicks. Why skipping other interesting character driven zombie Movies like "*The Evil Dead*", "*Re-Animator*" or "*The Serpent and the Rainbow*?" Why did you choose to stick to the "man-eating zombies" thing?

**Well, I think most zombie movies follow Romero's "rules" at least partially. There are variations in the speed of the zombies and other minor things but for the most part things pretty much run in-line with what George Romero set up aside from a few exceptions. So, I kinda thought I'd do my part in cementing the "rules" in other works about Zombies. Vampires and Werewolves have these set rules that are used to varying degrees in all works of fiction featuring them... but zombies are sometimes used in vastly different ways. So I just wanted to be another person out there following the "rules" as I think they should be.**

Also, these types of zombies lend themselves better to a long-term survival story that spans a number of years. I couldn't very well go the mad-scientist or the haunted cabin route and keep things interesting for years.

8) More on that. Unlike Romero, who gave his movies a strong political and satirical subtext, you seem to have put all your effort in character development and continuity. This seems quite funny, considering your "*Battle Pope*" stint and the frequent post-September Eleven references of today's so many mainstream comics.

**I like to keep things as timeless as possible. I'd hate for the issues of today to date the work. I think I've kept things fairly universal in the book. I mean, once we all have cell phones implanted in our heads it'll be hard to argue this didn't take place in the past but for now at least I don't think there's anything that dates to work too terribly much.**

9) Let alone the references to all survival horror's classics, seems to me that "*The Walking Dead*" is very akin to "grown-ups" comics like "*Kings in Disguise*", "*Strangers in Paradise*", "*Blankets*", etc. Which is quite surprising, if you think about the average "Wham-Bam" approach of Image Comics. After all these are the same guys of "*Spawn*" and "*Savage Dragon*"...



Ah, but you do Image a disservice by judging them by one book. They are also the company of *Leave it to Chance*, *A Touch of Silver*, *Age of Bronze*, *Ministry of Space*, *Fell*, *Hawaiian Dick* and countless other cerebral non-superhero books. Image is a company that can publish the wham-bam action of *Savage Dragon* and *Invincible* right next to the artiness of something like *Kabuki* or humor books like *Liberty Meadows* or *PVP*. Image is a truly unique and fantastic comic book publisher and I think *The Walking Dead* is just another quality book that fits in well with their overall line-up.

But yeah, the book is about the characters. I want people to care about the characters and want to see what happens to them next--above all else, this is what's most important with the book. Right now the American comics market is in the middle (or near the end) of a horror comics boom, or more specifically a zombie comics boom. They're everywhere. I don't think there's a publisher in comics that hasn't done at least one zombie book in the last five years. And that's going to bust eventually, soon, I think. Pretty soon people are going to be sick of zombie books. And if this book was solely about "zombies" and had little else to offer--the book might be hurt by that bust--and honestly it could still be hurt. But hopefully people will see there's much more to this book than simple zombie action and gore.

To be honest--I wouldn't have any fun writing this book if it was just zombie nonsense all the time. I'm much more interested in chronicling the lives of these characters than simply figuring out ways for them to die gruesome deaths.

10) although zombies have developed a loyal following during their ventures on the silver screen, comicwise they've never experienced a success like the one they had with "The Walking Dead" or "Marvel Zombies". How do you explain that?

I'm totally awesome? All joking aside--I have no clue. *Marvel Zombies*, I think, is a success because it's something Marvel has NEVER done before. It's something that's just shocking to see Marvel allow to be published. I did things in that book I thought I was going to be fired over--but they were fine with it. And I've got to think that at least contributed to its success.

With *The Walking Dead*--I don't really know. I think it has very little in common with other Zombie comics in that we focus on the characters so much. I'd like to stick with the book to the point that there aren't many zombies left in the book. I'd love to be able to write this comic for twenty years or more--to the point where the characters (that are left) are building houses and only see a zombie once every few months--and

the book is more about reestablishing civilization than it is about continually protecting themselves.

Most other zombie comics are just short-term cash grabs, really. Just do a one-shot of five or six issues and move on. And when you do that--you really don't have the room to do anything that hasn't been done better in countless movies. Now there are, of course, exceptions to that--like *Remains* by Steve Niles and Kieron Dwyer, which I thought was great. But for the most part, I don't think other zombie books offer up anything new.

At the very least--*The Walking Dead* offers the promise of the continued adventure... sticking with the same characters for years reaching past what any zombie movie has been able to show thus far.

At the end of the day, though--I have no clue why it sells so well. Maybe my mom is buying all the copies.

11) In the last few years you've been working alongside majors like Image and Marvel nonchalantly shifting from comedy to horror, from super-heroes to "What if". In which context do you feel most at ease, and why?

I find it all equally difficult. Some days I'm in the mood to write *The Walking Dead* but *Ultimate X-Men* is due and so it's kinda hard to kick into super-hero gear but for the most part I'm able to avoid that. I like doing different types of things all the time--it keeps things fresh and keeps me from having ideas that are interchangeable between whatever I'm working on.

I'm never sitting around deciding if I should do something in *The Walking Dead* or save it for *Invincible*. Everything I work on is so different from each other it's easy to keep things separate and bounce from book to book.

So some days it's easier to do a light-hearted superhero book and some days it's easier to do a dark superhero book or a survival horror book, it really just depends on what kind of mood I'm in and luckily, I've got enough differing work to be able to work on something no matter what mood I'm in.

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And that'll do it for this month. I promise to resume regular mail-answering duties next month. See you then!

-Robert Kirkman



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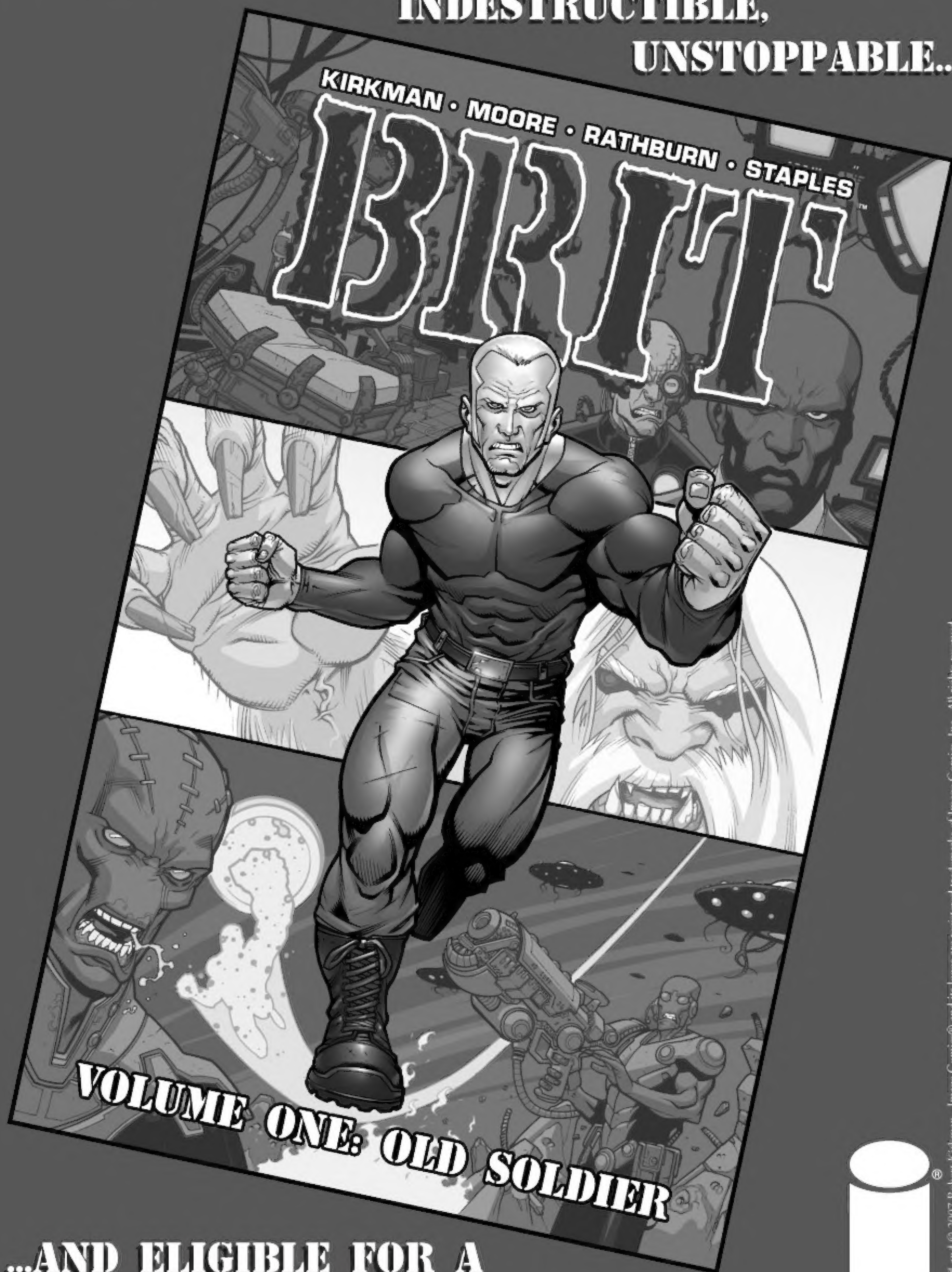
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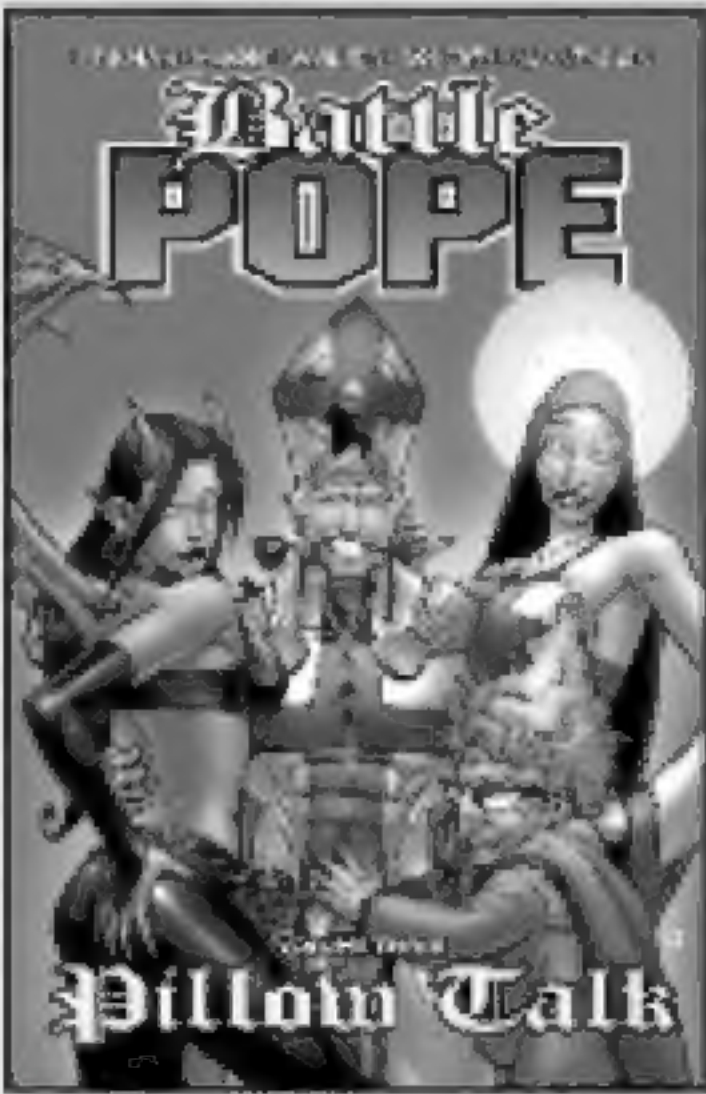
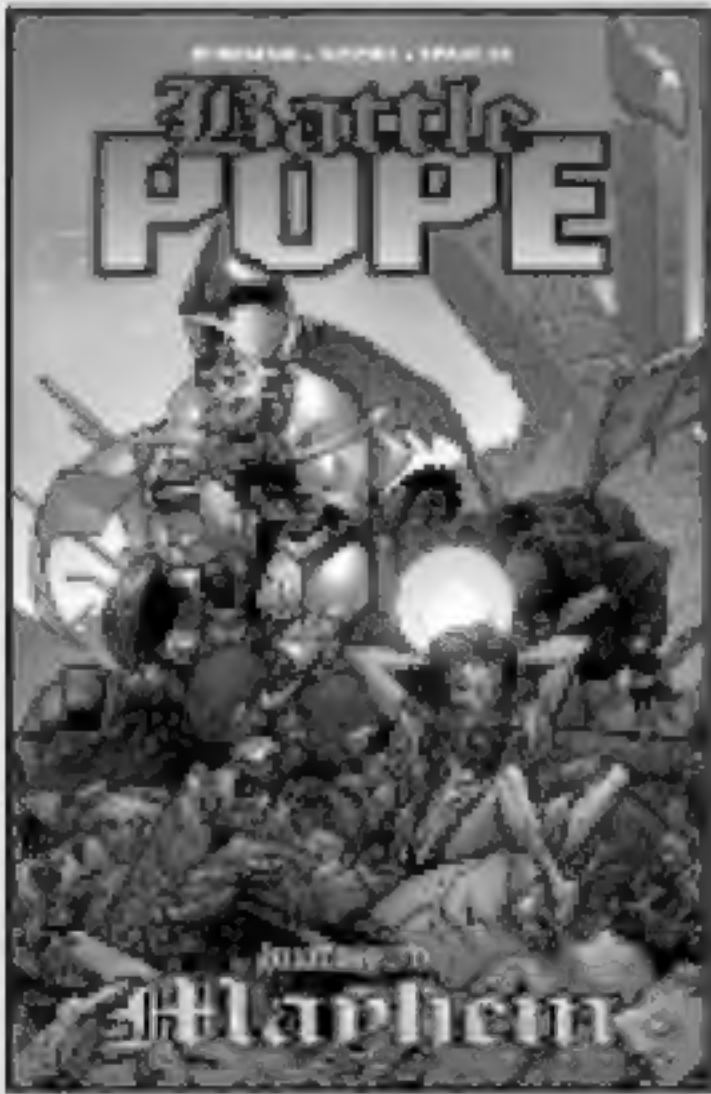
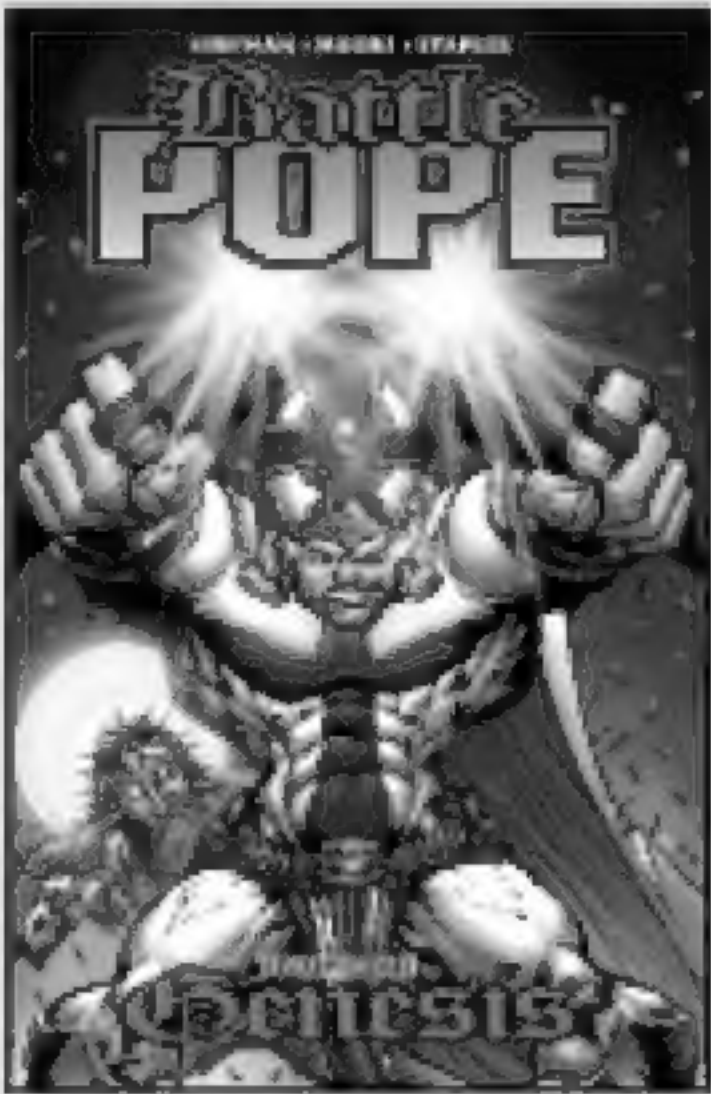
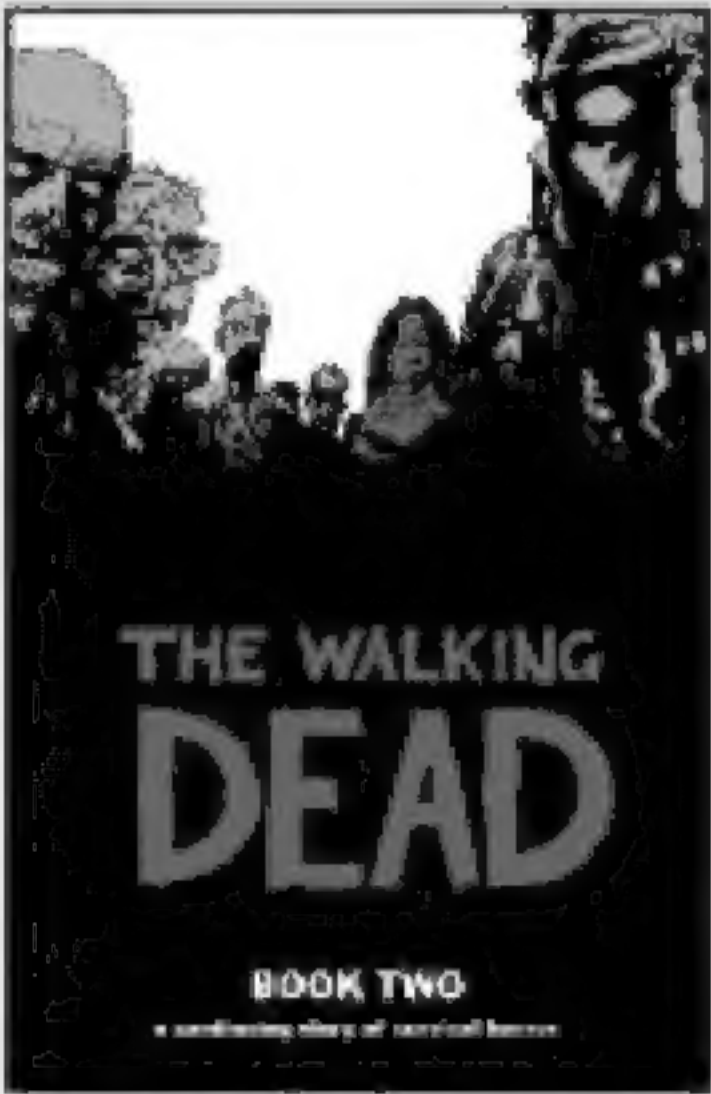
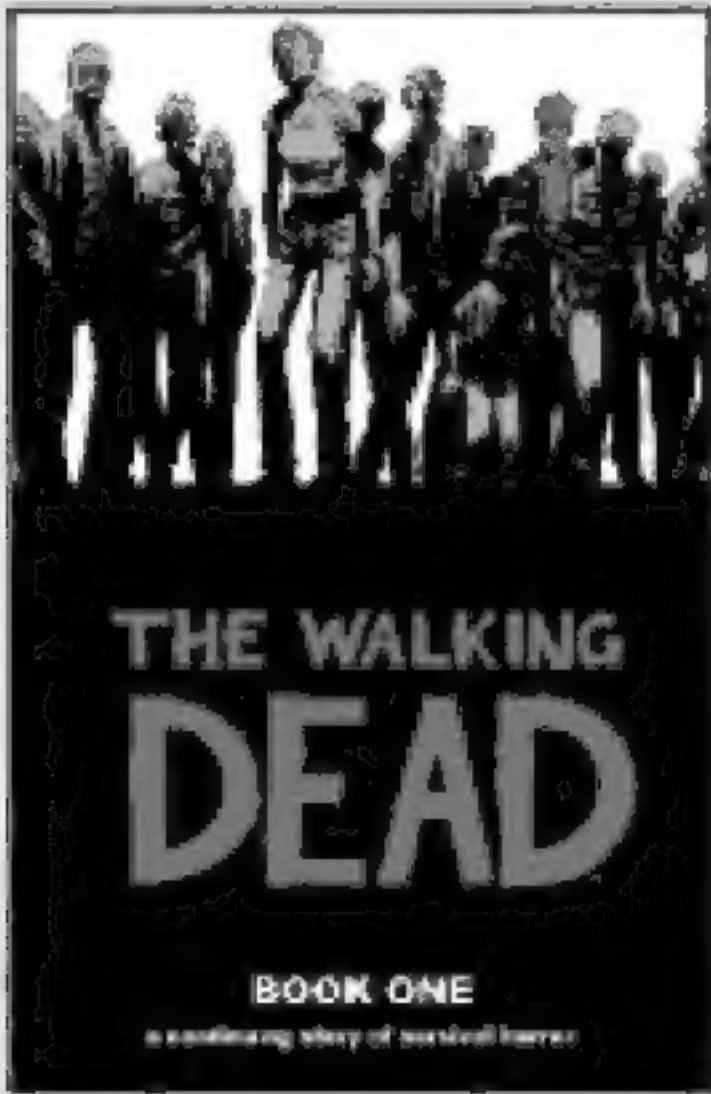
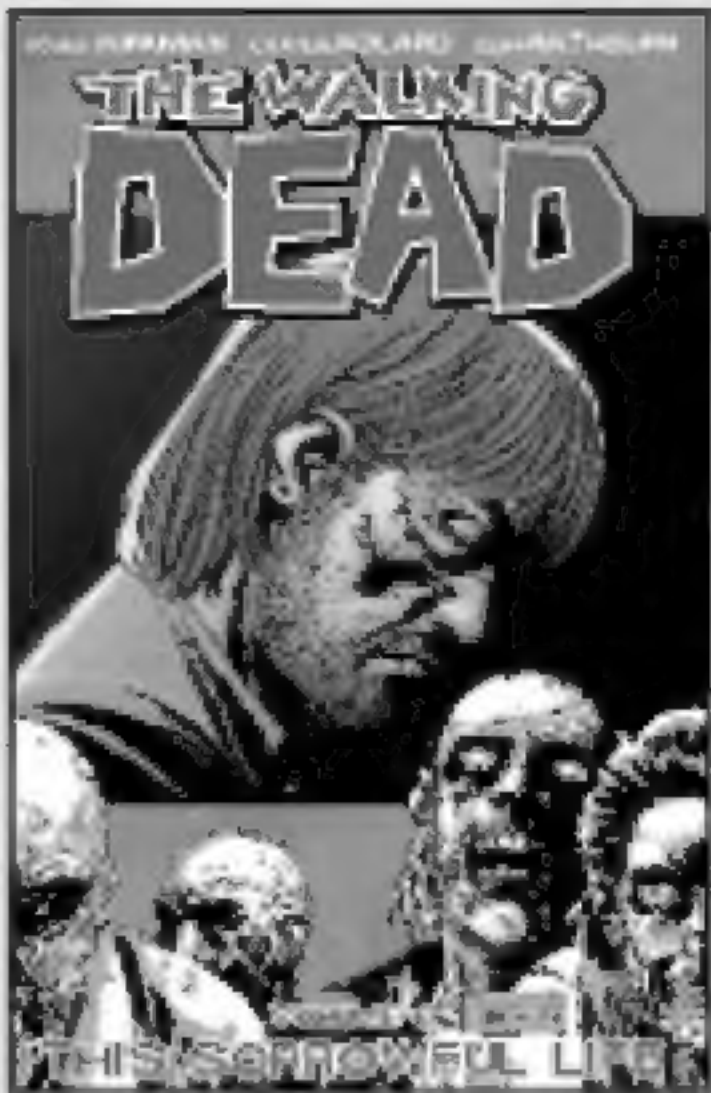
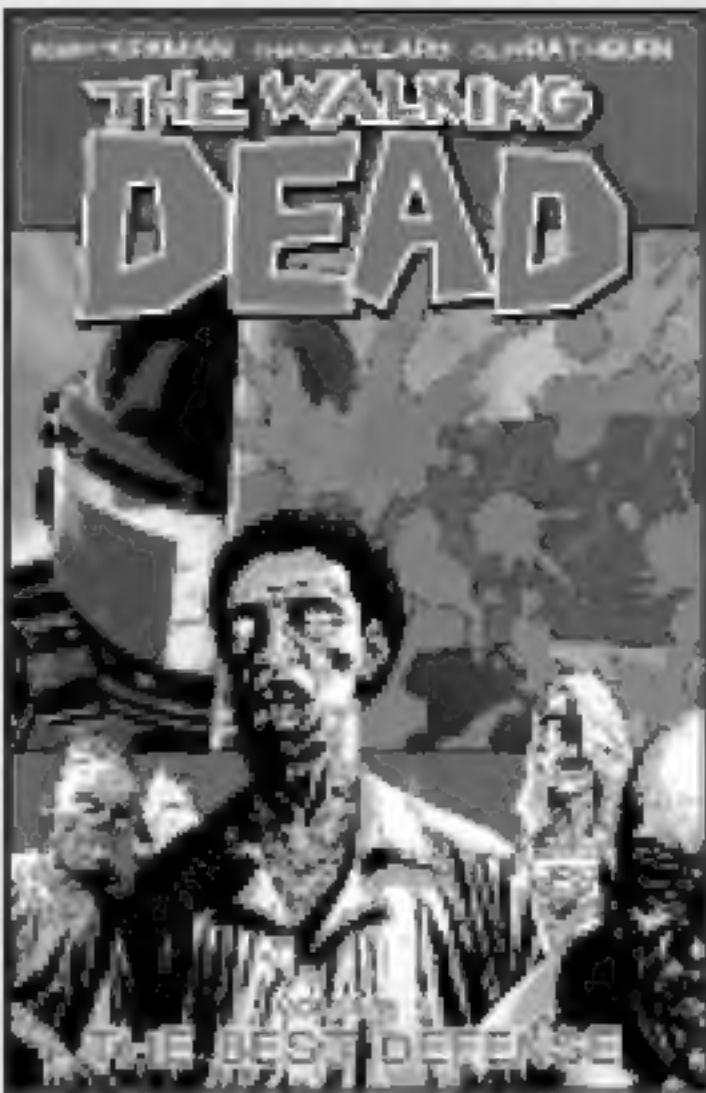
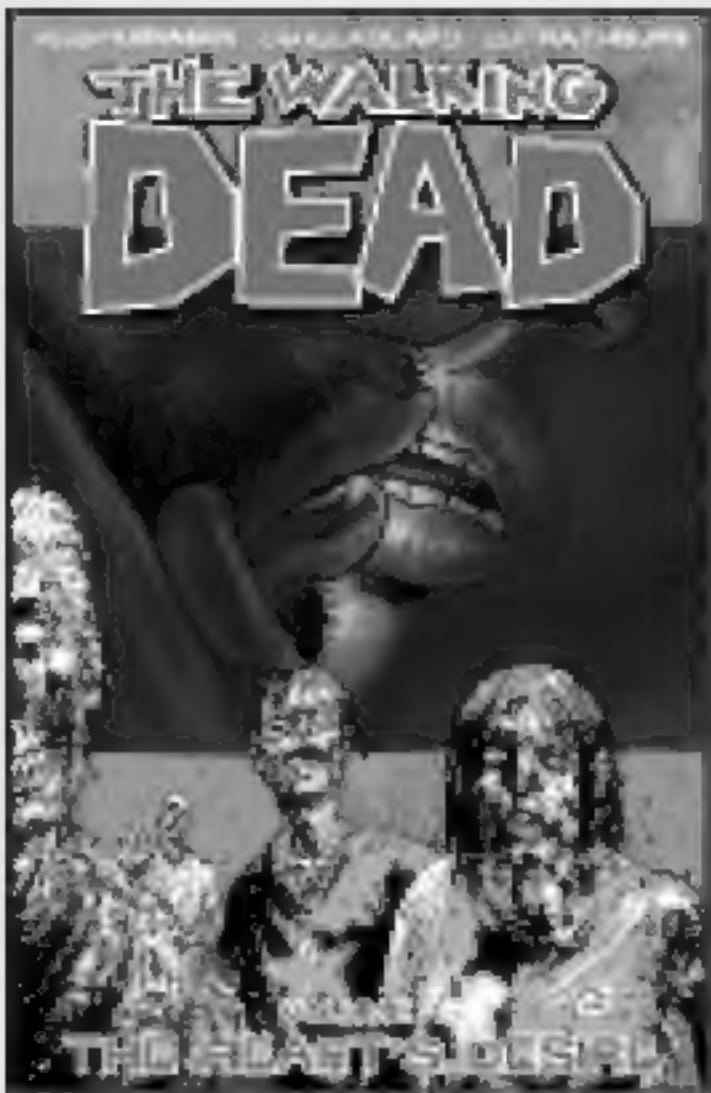
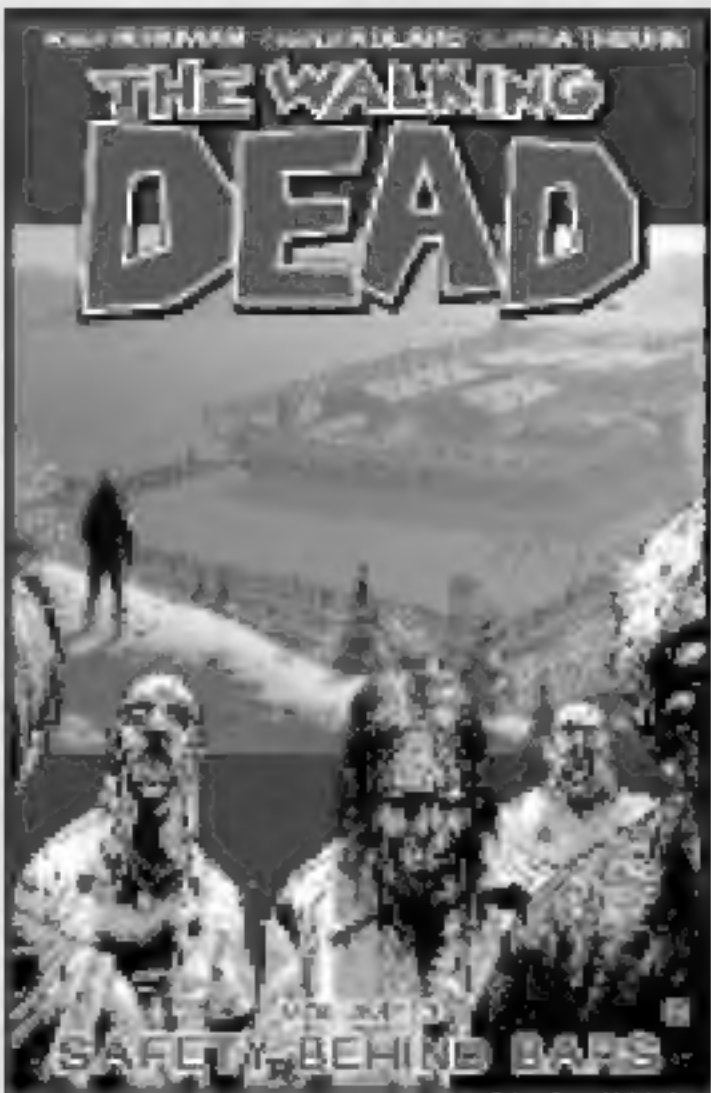
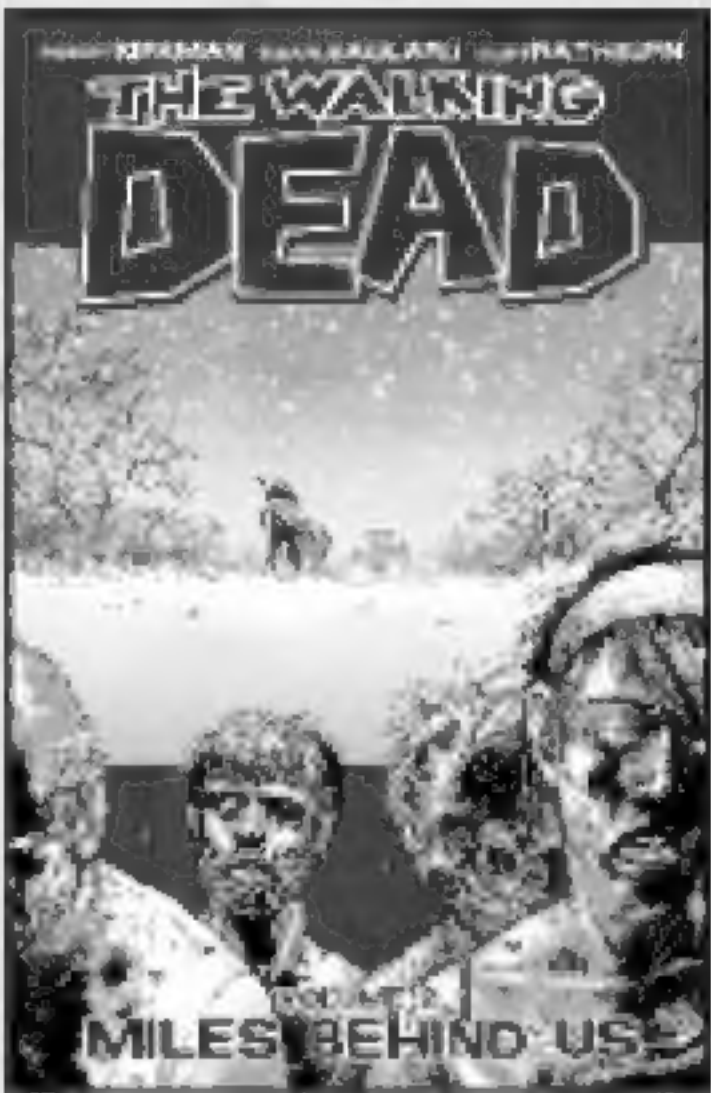
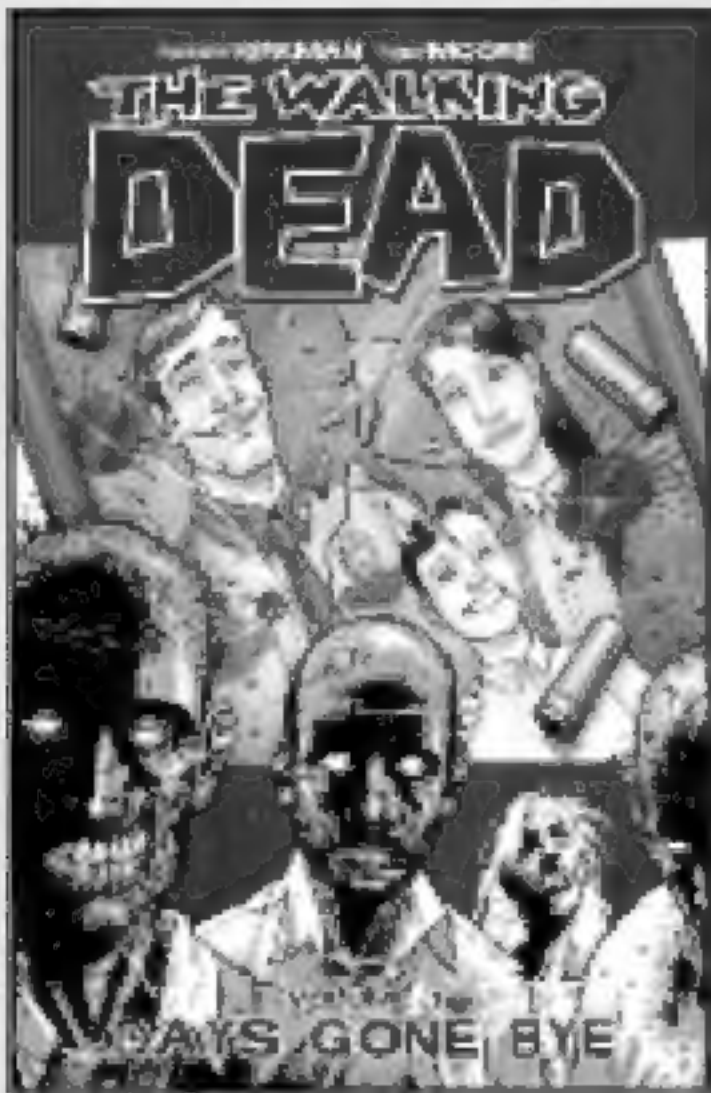
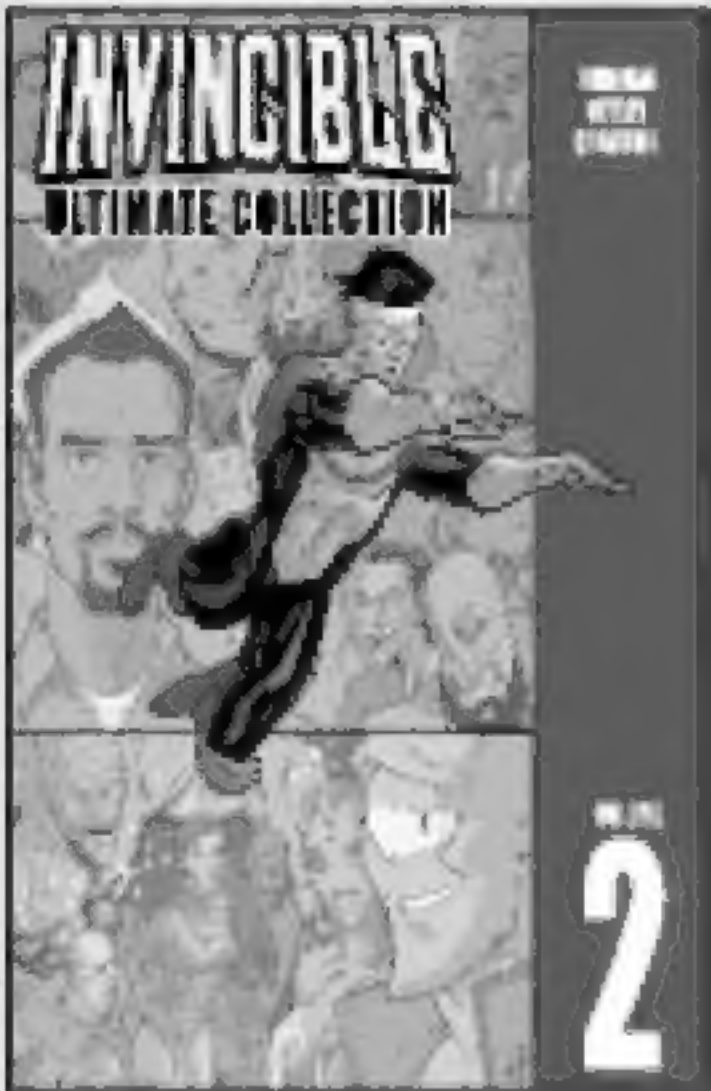
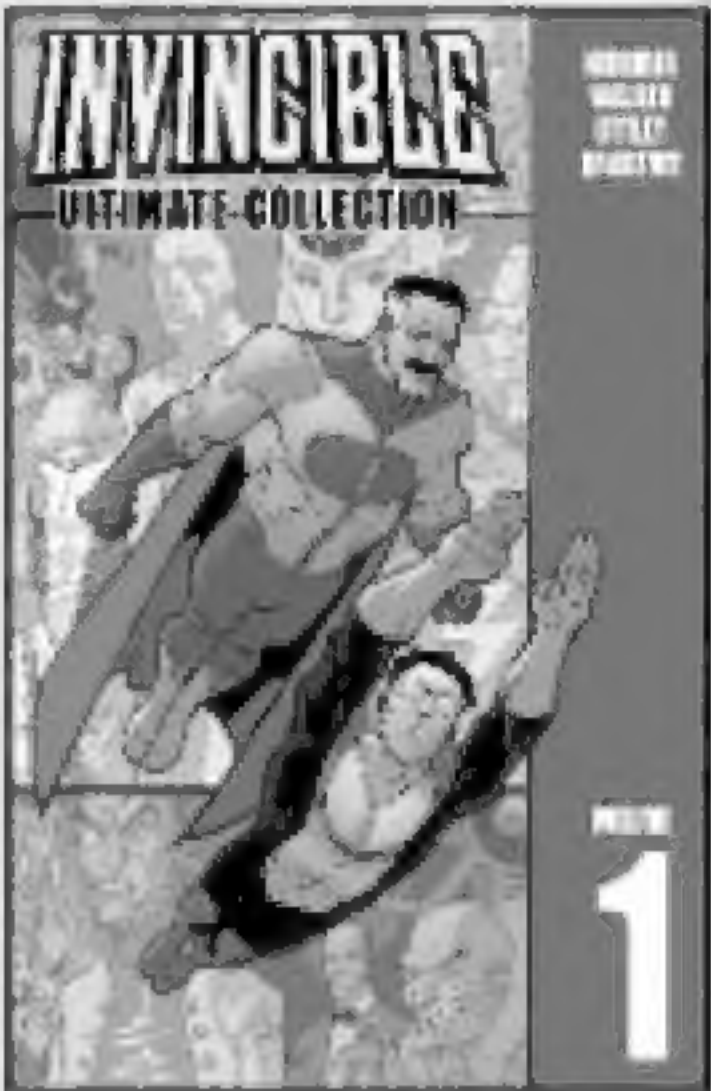
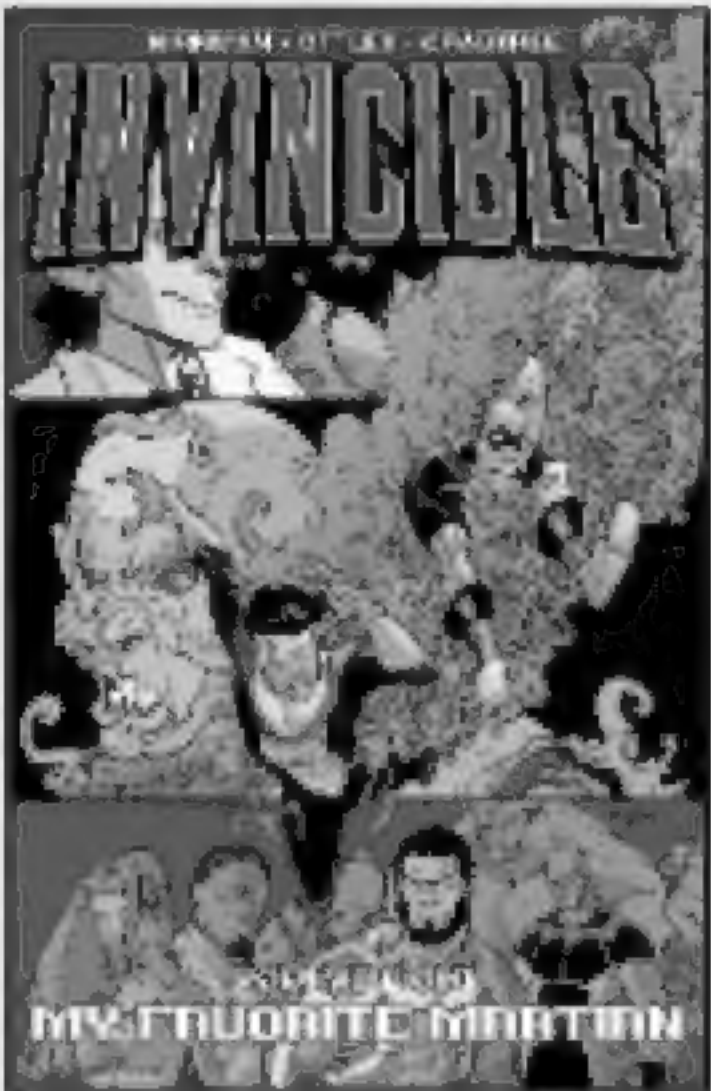
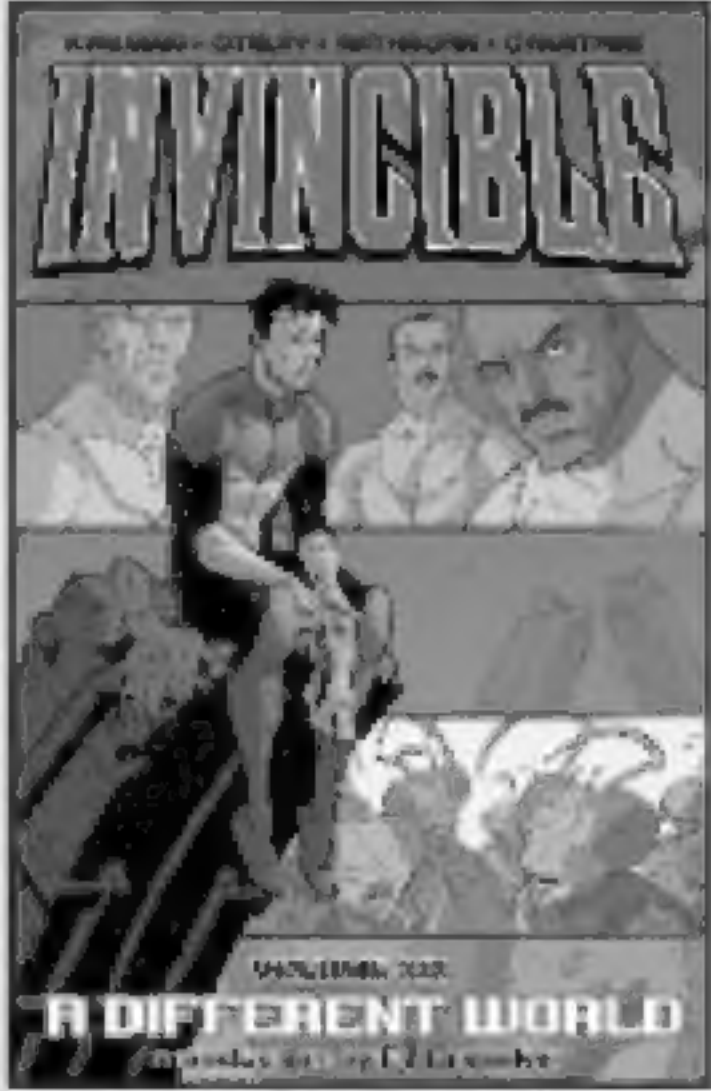
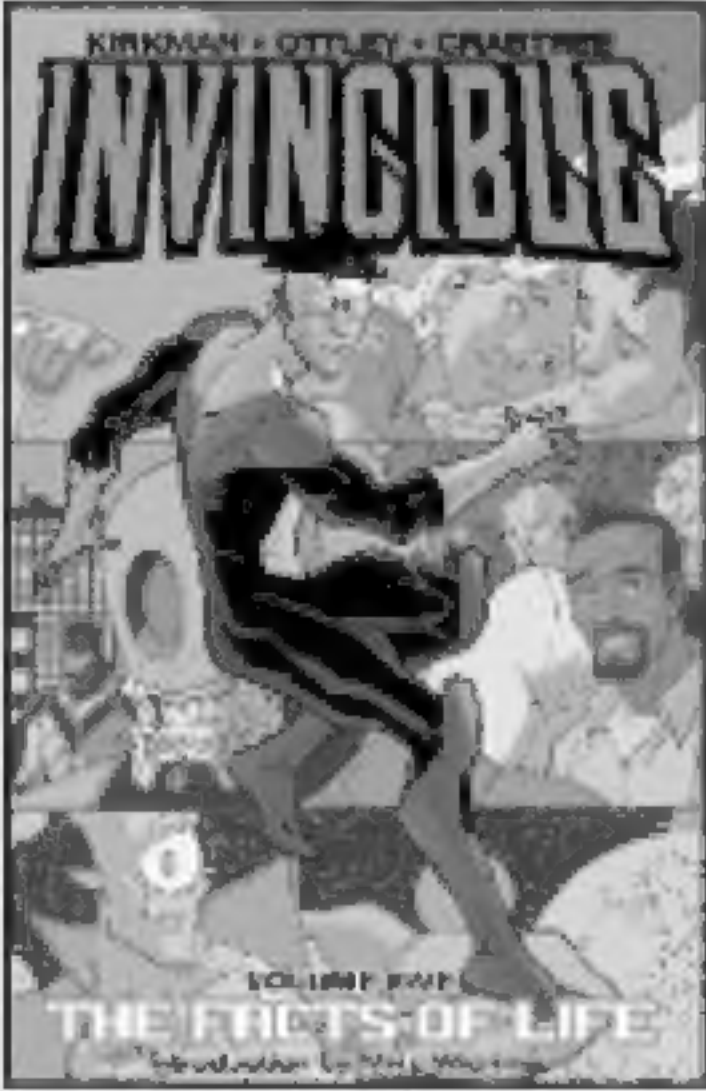
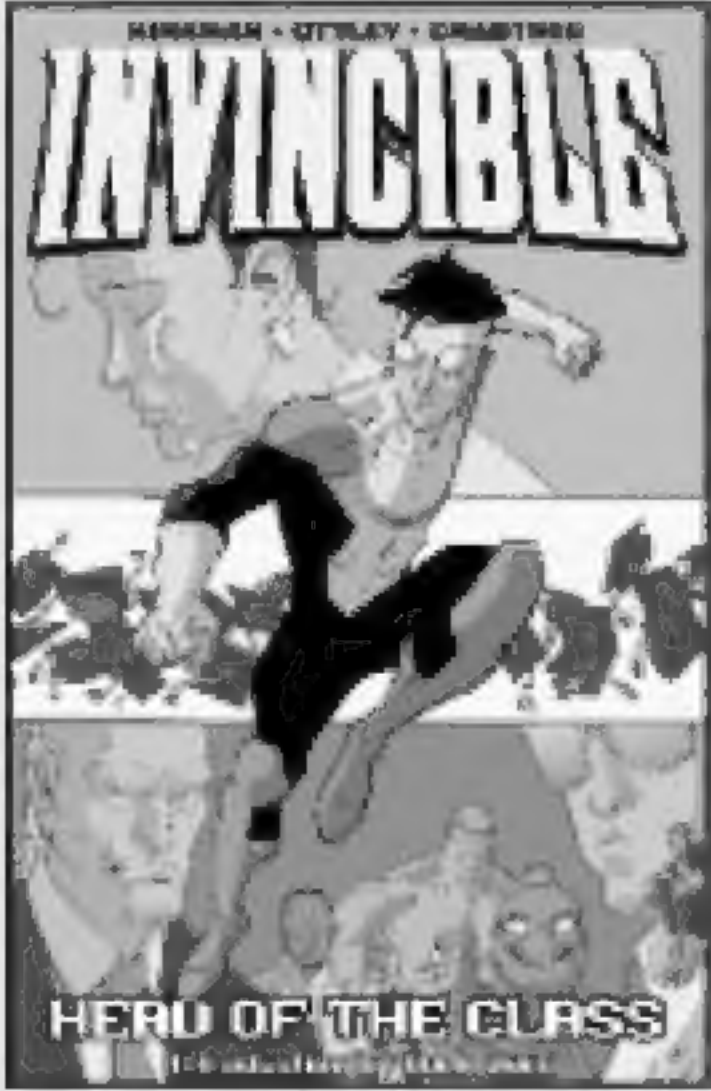
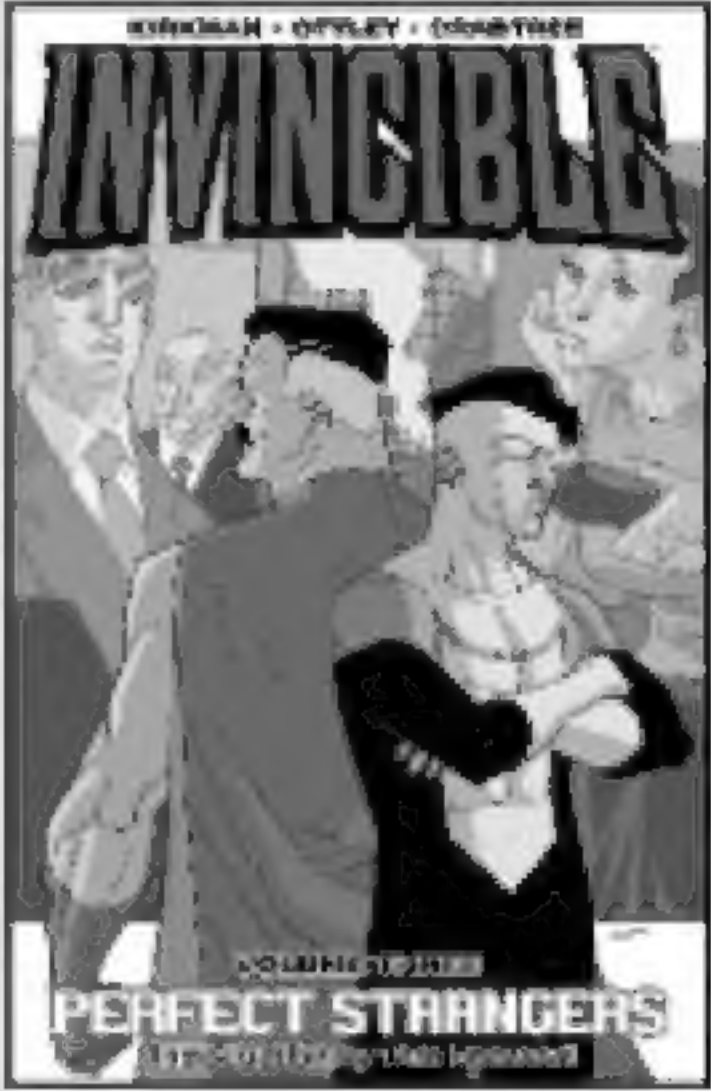
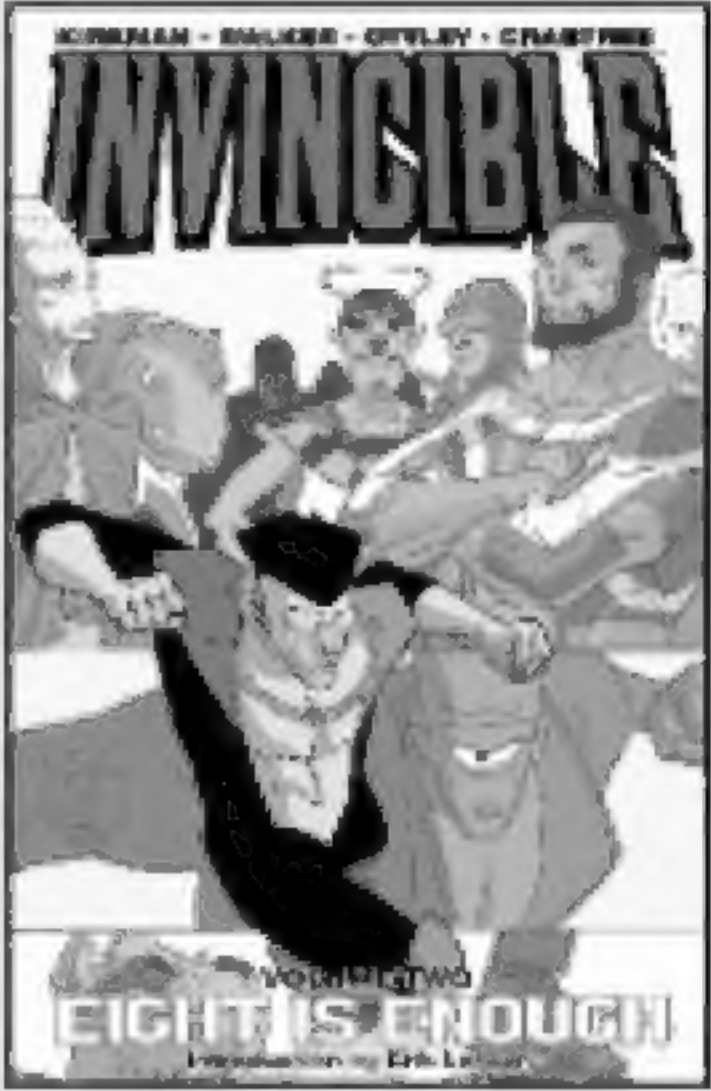
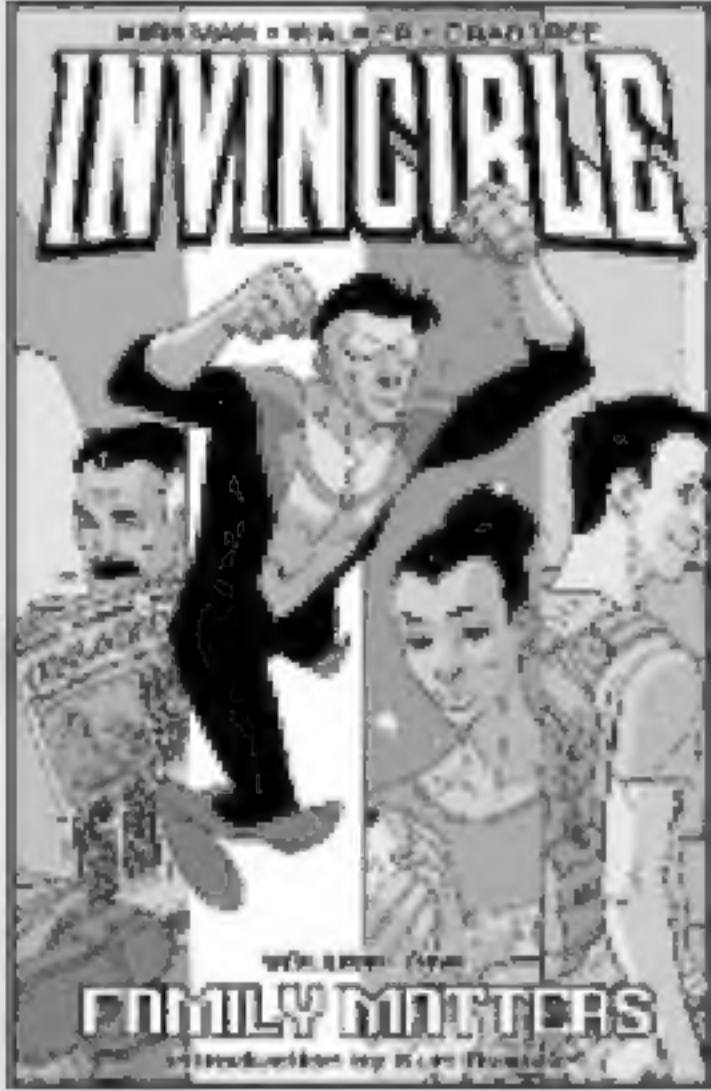
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